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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE public is not sure how much significance to attach to any one of the series of speeches which make front page news this week. Mr. Roosevelt's statement was not a public declaration; it may be taken, however, as an indication that, while American opinion remains highly critical of British and French policy, the Federal Administration is well aware that isolation would not be feasible in the event of war. The Nazi press has decided that this hint of democratic solidarity is war-mongering. As for Hitler's speech last Monday, that was greeted with relief on the ground that the Führer did not ask for the colonies back next week, announce an immediate mobilisation or specify the next move of the Axis. Certainly it was not, as Mr. Chamberlain said, the speech of a man intending at once to plunge Europe into war. It was, however, the speech of a man who is determined to regain the colonies as he was determined a year ago to take Austria and Czechoslovakia. The Führer also promised full support of Italy in case of war.

The Mediterranean

The next move is Mussolini's. On Mr. Chamberlain's remarks about goodwill and about disarmament as the test, Signor Gayda comments that goodwill follows and does not precede material satisfaction. In other words, the Duce wants colonies and the world knows that the demand is supported by the Führer. Later, when Germany's demands are explicit, they can be supported by the Duce—which is the trap in which the democratic Powers will remain unless they can work together and decide on a constructive colonial policy. It is now generally believed that M. Bonnet has already agreed behind the scenes to concede Jibuti, shares in the Suez Canal and a change in status for Italians in Tunis. On their merits as part of a real settlement these concessions would not be unreasonable. But even the Right in France is beginning to wonder how one reaches a settlement with Mussolini, and M. Bonnet's reported remarks to journalists about Italy's legitimate claims have not been well received by the French public. They certainly do not express M. Daladier's view. M. Bonnet has, of course, denied having made them, but his reputation is not such that his denials are easily accepted. In this impasse much depends on the way in which the Duce, publicly assured of German support, thinks it wise to phrase his demands in his next speech. The Italian press boasts of the helplessness of a France with three frontiers and celebrates the capture of Barcelona as a triumph of the non-intervening Italian troops.

The Tragedy in the Pyrenees

There has been no halt in the advance of Franco's forces since the fall of Barcelona. The Republican troops,

despite some desperate rallies here and there, have been pushed steadily back into the Pyrenees, with the Government sitting precariously in Figueras; and as we write there are reports of the capture of Seo de Urgel and of Vich. The stream of refugees which was flooding the roads for many days has thinned a little as the women and children have been allowed to cross into France; but there are still many thousands massed on the frontier at Bourg Madame and Perthus, or huddled in disorder at Puigcerda, and the fighting men—or the men who have abandoned the fight—present the French authorities with the gravest possible problem. What is to happen to the Republican Army pinched between the victorious rebels and the line of French troops, 50,000 or more, holding the frontier from Andorra to the sea? The latest news is that Franco is being asked to promise an amnesty to all those who surrender, or at least to take no reprisals. His reply so far has been that all prisoners may be sure of a fair trial. Few of them, we fear, will feel confident of that, and unless the French Government takes a bold and generous decision, there is every prospect that the last days of Catalonia will be an appalling terror.

America's European Frontier

The unfortunate death of a member of a French Air Mission in the crash of a "secret" experimental American fighter has had remarkable political consequences. Critics of the Administration seized, first, on the incident as a pretext for complaining that U.S. Air Force secrets were being sold to France. This charge having fallen to the ground, since the machine which crashed had not yet been taken over by the Air Force from the maker, the President had next to face the more general accusation that he was departing from the spirit of the Neutrality Act in secretively encouraging, or permitting, sales of aircraft exclusively to Britain and France. Nothing loth, Mr. Roosevelt took up the challenge. At his press conference on Tuesday he declared that he welcomed British and French purchases, since they helped to build up aircraft manufacture as a mass-producing industry in the United States. Would orders from Germany or Italy be equally welcome? The President refused to answer such a "hypothetical question"; the pressmen drew their own conclusions. Still clearer indications, however, of the Administration's attitude appear to have been given by Mr. Roosevelt to the Senate Military Affairs Committee, who were told at a White House conference that "America's defence frontier is in France." To read into this declaration the suggestion that America would again send an expeditionary force to help the democracies in a European war would be an error; but it certainly looks as though the Neutrality Act is crumbling fast, and that—so far as material supplies are concerned—America has taken sides.

Cabinet Reshuffle

Without an unduly harsh application of the Admiral Byng technique, Mr. Chamberlain's realignment of his Cabinet troops is nicely designed to spike the guns of the Government's critics in both the Churchill and Beaverbrook camps. Sir Thomas Inskip is demoted from the Ministry of Defence Co-ordination. He is relegated, however, not to the Lords (as expected) but to the Dominions Office, where he is still, theoretically, in line for No. 10. Mr. Morrison, whose discarded Milk Bill was a genuine effort to defeat vested interests, is thrown to the lions of the N.F.U. and the *Daily Express*, but he remains, as Chancellor of the Duchy, to reply in the Commons for the new Minister for Co-ordination of Defence. In this position Admiral Lord Chatfield, who has a reputation for "getting things done," can scarcely fail to shine in contrast to his predecessor. Into the Ministry of Agriculture steps Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, gentleman farmer and ex-President of the N.F.U. (Let the farmers assassinate their own man if they dare!) Earl Winterton retires gracefully from the Chancellorship of the Duchy to the sinecure post of Paymaster-General, in which he will continue to act as chairman of the Inter-Governmental Committee for Refugees. Of the rebel Junior Ministers, Lord Strathcona resigns from the War Office, but the Government is still to include both Mr. Hore-Belisha and Mr. Hudson. A neat, and not gaudy, reconstruction, which will doubtless hold together so long as Lord Chatfield does nothing in particular, and until the new Minister for Agriculture discovers that he can do little for the farmers without nationalising the land.

War Risks and Compensation

The Government's scheme for providing compensation for loss of life or injury, and for damage to merchant ships, cargoes and building property in the event of war was announced by Sir John Simon on Tuesday. Marine risks are to be reinsurable by underwriters with the Government; cover for essential stocks of materials on land will be arranged by the Government through Lloyds and the fire insurance companies. In the case of death or disablement, no distinction apparently is to be made between members of the forces, A.R.P. volunteers and other civilians. Compensation on the scale applicable to private soldiers and their dependants will be paid to all alike—a striking admission of the totalitarian character which any future hostilities will assume. The risk of damage to buildings from air bombardment is regarded by the Government as actuarially uninsurable, and the proposal to raise a premium fund by a surcharge on Schedule A assessments or a Stamp Duty on fire policies is turned down. Instead, the Chancellor promises that damage will be assessed by a Compensation Board, and that the Government, at the end of the war, will pay such compensation as it can afford. The building industry, whose operations in vulnerable areas are at present paralysed by the absence of definite war risk insurance facilities, will want something more precise than this vague pledge.

Anglo-French Conscience Money

Dr. Pospisil, the head of the Czecho-Slovak financial delegation which arrived in London last month, has not gone empty away: in addition to the £10 millions already advanced by Britain, the Government in Prague is to receive an additional £6 millions. Details of the final plan are as follows. A sterling loan of £8 millions, guaranteed jointly by the British and French Governments, will be raised in London. Out of the proceeds £6 millions will be used to fund part of the British advance; the remaining £4 millions will be treated as a gift. France, apart from guaranteeing half the sterling loan, takes over responsibility for the 1937-42 Czech loan floated in Paris to the tune of approximately £4 millions. Strictly speak-

ing, therefore, the Czechs obtain only £12 millions in new money, since the French gift is by way of remission of debt. The understanding is that £4 millions will be earmarked for emigration plans approved by the Central Institute for Refugees in Prague, while £8 millions will be available for general reconstruction and resettlement schemes in Czecho-Slovakia. It is to be hoped that in the whole of the expenditure the needs of refugees, which are becoming increasingly acute, will have priority. German pressure is increasing and terrible stories reach us of refugees falling back into the hands of the Third Reich. It is to democratic Czecho-Slovakia that we owe conscience money; we can let Germany pay for the strategic roads which the Czech Government must build whether it wishes or no.

The Third Five-year Plan

The thesis embodying the Third Five Year Plan of the Soviet Union has now been issued by Mr. Molotov, the Soviet Prime Minister, more than a year after the plan was scheduled to have been begun. The delay is said to have been due to the activities of wreckers and enemies of the people—a phrase which probably includes actual espionage and foreign plots, but which is even more just the Soviet way of saying that something has gone wrong. The Second Five Year Plan, which ended in 1937, was not completely fulfilled: indeed, in view of its extraordinarily ambitious projects, it is difficult to suppose that anyone ever expected that it could reach complete fruition. But, even apart from a mere falling short of the planned output, there was considerable dislocation, probably due in large measure to the necessity of intensifying armament production at the expense of other kinds of output on account of the more and more threatening world situation. Nor can the campaigns against "enemies of the people" who occupied important technical and strategic positions in industry and trade have passed off without a great deal of upset to the plans in hand. Mass purges, it is now announced, have proved inefficient and are to cease. The new Plan is too elaborate for its contents to be digested or summarised at this stage; but it appears to be less astonishingly ambitious than the Second Plan, and Mr. Molotov expresses the confidence that by the end of 1942 it will have been fully realised, and all the arrears, especially in the consumers' trades and the transport services, will have been wiped off.

The Anglo-German Coal Agreement

For the past four years there has been a working agreement between the British and Polish coal exporters for sharing out the market in settled proportions. But Germany, which with Great Britain does 80 per cent. of total European coal exports, has been outside this agreement and has been actively pushing her export trade by means of subsidies and special exchange sales. Under this stimulus, German coal exports rose from 27 million tons in 1935 to 38 millions in 1937, whereas British exports rose only from 51 to 52 millions. Something was done to check the growth of German sales in France by the recent Anglo-French coal agreement; and the Germans have now been induced to come into a bargain with the British exporters as the foundation for an all-European agreement. The terms of this new settlement have not been disclosed; but it is known that the Germans were demanding a quota based on their actual exports of 1937, whereas the British wanted to strike an average of seven years. Presumably some compromise has been reached between these rival proposals, giving the Germans some of the advantages derived from their policy of subsidies. If, as is expected, the smaller exporting countries come in, the European coal trade will be almost completely cartellised, both internally and internationally. The result will be a rise in prices in the importing countries, which have hitherto benefited by the German and other subsidies. How the British miners will be affected depends on the as yet undisclosed terms of the quota arrangement.

The Year's Shipbuilding

British shipyards launched in 1938 one-third of the world's new shipping, and secured rather less than one-third of the increase in total tonnage launched over the 1937 figures. Germany, followed fairly closely by Japan, came next in the list of launchings, with substantially less than half the British total; and the next in order of tonnage were the United States, Sweden and Denmark, with Italy a long way farther behind. It is to be noted that Great Britain built nearly half the total tonnage of steamships, but only a quarter of the motor tonnage and only a slightly higher proportion of the oil tankers launched. A good many of the steamers were equipped to burn oil, and only about 17 per cent. of the new tonnage was so constructed as to depend exclusively on coal fuel. The British shipbuilding industry was appreciably more active in 1938 than in 1937, and has made a large recovery since the bottom of the depression; but the figures of 1928-30 have not been nearly regained, though world launchings in 1938 were well ahead of the peak figure of 1930. In other words, though shipbuilding output rose, there was no sign of the British yards regaining their old pre-eminence in construction for foreign owners.

London Traffic and A.R.P.

The Minister of Transport's attempt to impose "no waiting" regulations on motor vehicles over more than thirty miles of streets in Central London is arousing, very naturally, the most vigorous opposition from shopkeepers as well as from the car-using public. The Motor Legislation Committee, which represents both motor manufacturers and such bodies as the A.A. and R.A.C., is now demanding a full inquiry into the London Traffic problem; and the Westminster City Council is pushing alternative plans for the diversion of through traffic put forward on behalf of the trading interests. Both sections of opinion stress the necessity, instead of merely banning the traffic, of greatly improved provision for receiving and dealing with it, especially by the creation of adequate parking places and garage accommodation, and the provision of embayed stopping places for public service vehicles, so as to avoid interruption of traffic. Admittedly, the problem is very difficult to solve; but these are obviously among the best ways of dealing with it. It seems plain that a great many of the waiting vehicles ought to be stored away underground, and that the opportunity ought to be seized of providing accommodation to serve both this purpose and that of bomb-proof shelters.

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SO ODER SO

NOTHING is more significant of our present discontents than the way in which the Western democracies now hang upon the words of the Nazi Führer. Last week, in spite of Sir Samuel Hoare's admonitions and partly because of his policy, the City was full of jitterbugs. But since Monday not only have our speculators displayed an ostrich optimism worthy of Lord Beaverbrook, but even the Premier, whose speech at Birmingham was tinged with that resigned determination which he first displayed in his Crisis broadcast, is his old resilient self. And all because Hitler has said that he looks forward to a long period of peace.

These sudden jumps out of extreme pessimism into extreme elation are not only unwarranted by the facts, but are also precisely what Nazi policy seeks to induce. Like a stoat playing a rabbit, Hitler hypnotises his opponents with fear; and then, with a grand gesture of forbearance, he releases them so violently from their forebodings that they are ready to make yet more concessions for the sake of that final settlement which seems once more to be just round the corner.

Such tactics should not destroy our powers of reason. That Hitler prefers that there should be no war this March does not mean that the ogre has turned into a fairy prince. If we need food for optimism let us derive it from President Roosevelt's newly declared intention to come to our aid, not from Adolf Hitler's verbal assurance that we can live in peace for a time. And let us not, in nervous delight at the present deliverance, forget that it may be largely due not to the dictators' magnanimity but to the continued resistance of Republican Spain. Their present mood may change as soon as they have consolidated that strategic frontier which is necessary for the renewal of aggression.

Unfortunately, the Premier, in his speeches at Birmingham and in the House of Commons, still exuded that obstinate complacency which he assumed after Munich. Comparing himself not unfavourably with the younger Pitt, he assured his audience last Saturday that the settlement of Munich was "only an incident in a consistent unwavering policy"; and in a highly significant passage he argued that the Anglo-Italian agreement had saved the peace of Europe by ensuring that Mussolini would co-operate at Munich. Apparently he still hoped that he had weakened the Berlin-Rome Axis by his visit to Rome and secured at least the neutrality of Italy in the case of war. Had he not believed this it is inconceivable that even Mr. Chamberlain could have talked for forty minutes about foreign affairs without once mentioning Spain.

These illusions seem to have survived the Führer's speech. Hitler made it clear that he was prepared to support Italy's claim to her share of the wealth—and in case anyone should interpret this as a reasonable claim about which we should all agree he added that in any war in which Italy was engaged Germany would fight on the side of her friend. Undeterred, Mr. Chamberlain last Tuesday repeated the old arguments in defence of "non-intervention," and once more upbraided anyone who doubted the word of a dictator if it had twice been broken. Can it be that the plaudits of the Italian crowds which made his visit to Rome so pleasurable were of more significance to him than the shouts of "To Paris, to Paris!" with which that same crowd greeted the fall of Barcelona?

When we turn to an analysis of the speech which has so gladdened the hearts of Tory M.P.s and City financiers, we cannot but observe that Hitler sedulously avoided any precise formulation either of his demands or of his future policy, and preferred to present to the world 220 typescript pages of verbal tactics. This is his regular device. While he manoeuvres for the next campaign he speaks; and the speech is both a cover for the manoeuvre and itself a manoeuvre of considerable skill. We should not forget that last Spring, a few weeks before the rape of Austria, Herr Hitler delivered an oration filled with much the same mixture of philosophy, economics, endearments and threats. Then the world heaved a sigh of relief. On Tuesday Hitler frankly told us that before he made that peaceful speech he had decided to achieve the Anschluss *So oder so*. Is it significant that in his treatment of the colonial problem he should have repeated that sinister phrase and announced that it would be settled *So oder so?* Dr. Schusschnig was promised a long period of peace—on conditions.

By studying this speech no one can learn what the Führer will do. He talked of Germany's difficulties, but not in the tone of one frightened by the danger of economic collapse. On the contrary, the departure of Dr. Schacht was celebrated by a return to the revolutionary philosophy which was dropped from the Party propaganda in 1930. Grounding his case upon the poverty of the German nation, he borrowed Lenin's broadly correct analysis of imperialism to prove that in the Great War the three demoplutocracies had sought to eliminate a trade rival; and he coupled a demand for colonies with a threat that he would tolerate no interference by the Western Powers in matters solely of German concern—a clear hint that Central and South-East Europe are now an exclusive zone of Nazi exploitation. This anti-capitalist flavouring, which was also apparent in a reference to the wealth of the Protestant and Catholic churches of Germany, was accentuated by a remarkable exclusion of all attacks on Soviet Russia. Bolshevism and Judah were denounced in the usual unquotable language, but Hitler made it clear that in the immediate future his interest lay not in Eastern aggression, but in settling accounts with the Western democracies.

In his statement to the House Mr. Chamberlain disregarded this undercurrent of hostility. Clinging to the soothing phrase about a long period of peace, he indicated that, if some arms limitation could be agreed on, a final settlement was possible; and it is clear that he envisages a new conference to complete the work of Munich. No one in his senses can oppose the idea of a conference, but it is high time to take steps to prevent a repetition of the blunders of last September. Already Hitler has begun to formulate his threats. If British propaganda increases, and if we take any measures to protect British exports against the Nazi trade drive, he will start reprisals. Shall we again permit our opponents to make all the demands and be content if we can whittle them down to a minimum? Shall we in our anxiety to prevent a breakdown of negotiations cajole yet another democracy into suicide for the sake of peace? That way

lies disaster. There are other methods, more honest and less dangerous.

So oder so—that is the real message of Hitler's speech. A totalitarian State does not waste time negotiating with an irresolute opponent unless it is totally successful by these methods. Germany "must export or die," and if she can get all she wants by a second Munich so much the better. Negotiations in these conditions are far from easy, but there are three things which we can do. In the first place, we should turn our attention from Berlin to Washington and welcome indubitable friends before we confer with jealous rivals. In the second place, we ought not to confer before we have agreed with the other democracies what are the vital interests which each of us cannot surrender under any conditions; and in the third place, we should state our own demands and thus ensure that the other side do not do all the bidding. The solution is for us to take the initiative, begin to put our own imperial house in order, and know beforehand where and on what principles of right we are prepared to stand. Until we have done these things all talks and concessions to the anti-Comintern Powers will be calamitous. Hitler's speech suggests that we still have some time to do them. For this we can be thankful, but if the respite is not employed to reform ourselves, consolidate our forces and unite our policies, a second Munich will be a repetition of the first and a prelude to the third.

For we can only preserve our freedom if we understand the forces that are arrayed against us. In these days a cheery belief that Fascists are at bottom decent business men will bring us to disaster. We can only achieve the best by understanding the worst; and Mr. Chamberlain, before he opens a new phase of appeasement, might well ponder the words of the great poet who died last week:

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.

Given the right leadership, the best need not lack conviction. There is still a democratic faith that some Englishmen hold with passionate intensity.

LABOUR'S AGRICULTURAL POLICY

PROPOSALS for agrarian reform used mostly to begin with an exposure of the abuses of landlordism: now they begin most often either with the facts about malnutrition or with the problem of food supply in time of war. This is not because the abuses of landlordism have disappeared: on the contrary, the traditional three-party system of landlord, tenant-farmer and labourer is nearer breakdown than ever. It is because the food problem has taken on a different aspect in face of changes in the world outlook, in scientific knowledge of the essential food requirements of mankind, and in Great Britain's position as a trading country. The need for large additional supplies of protective foodstuffs is now generally recognised; the danger of being cut off from foreign sources of supply in time of war has become pressing; and, even apart from the war danger, the heavy fall in British export trade makes it impracticable to look forward with confidence to buying abroad all the additional food we need, without making any attempt to expand production at home. Moreover, the continued exodus of population from the countryside creates more alarm than it did, now that emigration has dwindled away and there is a continual surplus of unemployed labour in the industrial areas.

These are the outstanding considerations which face everyone who attempts to frame a food policy for Great Britain to-day. Add that the standards of living for agricultural labourers and smallholders are markedly inferior to the standards of most urban workers, and that this disparity creates new problems in view of the improved facilities for transport to the towns and the rise in relative costs of living in the country areas. Add finally that world agricultural prices have fluctuated quite crazily in the post-war period, so as to reduce farming operations to something near a gamble; that the farmers, largely as a result of their experience in the Great War, have become organised and vociferous about their claims; and that the prosperity of the British Dominions and of British investments i.. the Dominions (and in the Argentine) is closely bound up with the agricultural policy which Great Britain decides to pursue.

In face of all these problems, it cannot be easy to formulate a policy for British agriculture. Notoriously, the present Government has failed to do so, and is now being compelled under pressure from the discontented farmers to try again. On the other hand, the Labour Party, which did formulate a fairly comprehensive policy some time ago, and took the first steps towards carrying it out when Lord Addison was Minister of Agriculture in the second Labour Government, has so far failed to win the farmers' support, or to make any impression on the almost solid Toryism of the agricultural constituencies. The farmer grumbles; but he usually votes Tory, except in a few areas where Liberal Nonconformity retains its hold. He votes Tory, partly because he is conservative, but also because the Tory Party is the protectionist party, and he still tends to think of tariffs as the likeliest means of giving him a better and more assured price for his produce.

In Lord Addison's book*, just issued by the Left Book Club, the Labour Party's agricultural policy, last fully formulated in 1932, is restated and brought up to date. Its objective is, broadly, to bring about an expansion of food supply, especially of the more valuable protective foodstuffs, mainly by increasing home output, so as to leave the quantity of imports pretty much what it is. On Lord Addison's calculations, this would involve, on a basis of nutritional adequacy, nearly doubling our present output of milk, raising home egg production by 60 per cent. and vegetable production to the same extent, growing nearly 80 per cent. more fruit, and increasing meat output by about a quarter. All these increases, on Lord Addison's hypothesis of all-round adequate nutrition, would leave unaffected our existing total volume of food imports; and they would, of course, call in addition for a considerable increase in our present importation of feeding stuffs for animals.

This problem of feeding stuffs raises, indeed, one of the most difficult problems. Lord Addison, basing his conclusions largely on Scandinavian data, holds strongly that arable cultivation gives far higher yields than pasturage in respect of meat and milk production as well as in the supply of cereals. He therefore wants a large extension of the arable acreage (back to the total cultivated in the 'seventies), including a large additional home production of wheat. "By present methods, before any possible improvements have been adopted, the arable land of this country produces from 2½ to 3 times as much cattle food per acre as permanent grass or, in terms of human and animal food together, will produce as much meat per acre as good grass, in addition to the corn and other foods provided for human consumption."

This, however, at once raises the difficulty that the world is faced already with a glut of wheat, so that increased wheat cultivation here must add to the problems of Canada and Australia, and the wheat we want can be bought abroad much more cheaply than we can hope to produce it here. There are strong arguments, both politico-economic and purely economic,

* *A Policy for British Agriculture.* By Lord Addison. Gollancz. 7*s.* 6*d.*

against increasing wheat output, at any rate until we have taken more direct steps to increase the output of foodstuffs of which we desire to expand our total consumption. The wheat-levy is tolerable to the consumer as long as our home production is relatively small. It would become a formidable tax on consumption if the wheat acreage were increased by providing for a larger total subsidy to the growers.

This problem of prices is of course crucial, not only in relation to wheat, but over the whole field. We want to increase the production and consumption of milk; but it is useless to increase production by raising prices, for that will cause consumption to fall and involve the diversion of still more milk into the uneconomic manufacturing market. Lord Addison relies, in this matter of prices, chiefly on the large economies which could be made in distribution—that is, on a reduction of the margin between the price paid to the farmer and by the consumer. Some of this saving he looks to securing at the wholesale stages—particularly by means of better selling organisation at the producer's end—but a large part of it must clearly come out of the inflated retail margin, and this clearly involves a drastic reorganisation of the methods of retail trade.

At the producers' end there is the question of land ownership and capital provision to be faced. Lord Addison, following the Labour scheme, argues forcibly in favour of public ownership of all agricultural land—of course, without displacement of existing owner-occupiers from their farms. He shows very clearly how, in the case of the owner-occupier, this would release for improvements capital at present locked-up in the land, and how, in the case of the tenant-farmer as well, it would place at his disposal an agency much better equipped for restocking the land with badly needed capital than the vast majority of private landlords can possibly be. The case for public ownership is indeed overwhelming, in view of the breakdown of the old system of landlord finance; and Lord Addison's carefully considered plans for compensation deserve attentive study. They would convince most farmers, if it were possible for the case to be considered rationally and without political *parti pris*.

Given public ownership, Lord Addison wants a Land Commission, working under the Government as the general agent of economic planning in the agricultural sphere. Under the Commission he wants expert staffs advising County Agricultural Committees and a series of Marketing Boards based as now on producers' representation, but without any final control over prices, and with no control at all over prices beyond the wholesale marketing stage. He stresses the point that his own Marketing Act of 1931 was meant only as the first stage in a general scheme of control, and needs to be supplemented by public control of distribution and of development policies in the consumers' interests.

In general, this machinery seems to be on the right lines. But the really vital issues relate much less to the machinery than to the basic questions of policy. The problem of getting the right machinery does not present much difficulty—*on paper*. It is mainly a matter of standing up to the powerful vested interests at present in control of the processes of distribution. The question of policy goes much deeper; for, though it is easy enough to base the argument for increased food production on a plain demonstration of nutritional needs, it remains true that the additional food needed cannot be bought unless either the consumers are provided with larger incomes, or the price of food falls. But, if the farmer is to get a square deal and the labourer the £2 minimum wage Lord Addison proposes, the price of food will rise and the consumption fall off, unless really large economies in distribution can be secured and a rapid advance made in the technical efficiency of farming. Doubtless, this dilemma can be evaded by a great extension of subsidies financed out of general taxation, provided the taxes do not fall largely on the poorer consumers. But there are too many claims on the Exchequer for a really comprehensive demand for further agricultural subsidies to stand much chance of being met from this source. The upshot of this argument is that it is imperative greatly to reduce the price-spreads between producers and retailers, because this is the only way in which a rapid increase in consumption seems likely to be brought about. And it is also vital that what money is available for agricultural subsidies should be so used as to increase consumption of the more essential foods, such as milk, and not, as now, to buttress high consumers' prices by subsidising the uneconomic use of the surpluses which the high prices make it impossible for the consumers to buy.

FRANCE AFTER BARCELONA

What is to be the last act of the Catalan tragedy? Women and children and old men are being allowed into France—and the French authorities, though overwhelmed by the extent of the disaster, are doing what they can. But no able-bodied men are allowed to cross the frontier. This may be right, so long as the Republicans are still fighting south of Gerona. But what if Franco pushes as far as the frontier? One cannot yet tell. Consider the case of the 1,500 men of the International Brigade who are starving and dying of cold in camps round Puigcerda. Before being demobilised by the Spanish Government these men belonged to the flower of the Republican Army. A ship was going to take them to Mexico; and once the ship was "ready to receive them," they were going to be allowed to travel to Bordeaux. A fortnight ago M. Bonnet said at the Chamber that the matter would be settled "to-day or to-morrow." They still seem to be at Puigcerda, without being allowed to cross the frontier. For they are Germans, Austrians, Czechs—men "without nationality"—and what has happened to the ship on which they were to sail is a mystery. But can nothing be done for these splendid men? Are they to be massacred, or allowed to die like mangy dogs, after having fought a hundred battles for Government Spain? Would France not take them even if they undertook to join the Foreign Legion? It is all a fearful problem for France; but surely these men are a particularly "deserving case."

As one looks back on the last eight or nine months, British and French policy in relation to Spain becomes terribly clear. The fall of Barcelona was, in fact, agreed upon in London and Paris last June. On May 14th Mussolini, infuriated by Franco's failure to win, made his famous speech at Genoa, in which he praised Mr. Chamberlain, but said that Franco-Italian relations would remain strained "so long as France and Italy continue to fight on different sides of the barricade." At that time a crisis was threatening over Czechoslovakia, and M. Bonnet took the view that it was necessary to do everything possible to "secure Italy's neutrality" in case of war. And he thought that the best way of doing this was to close once again the Catalan frontier to armaments. M. Daladier, who had his own ideas about France's Empire routes and all that, would not hear of it at first. But three weeks later came a very firm "suggestion" from Mr. Chamberlain that the French had better close the Catalan frontier, and the reason he gave was that it would put Italy and Germany in a better humour and would facilitate the work on the Non-Intervention Committee which was just then working on its precious plan for the Withdrawal of Volunteers. Of course, no similar "suggestion" was made to Portugal. The Catalan frontier alone interested Mr. Chamberlain. M. Daladier grumbled, and thought it was unfair; but M. Bonnet supported Mr. Chamberlain's "suggestion," and the frontier was closed on June 13th.

That was not all. While the French had done their little bit in strangling the Spanish Government, Mr. Chamberlain was doing his bit by refusing to do anything to stop the bombing of British ships in Spanish Government ports. Air blockade on the sea, and a closed Catalan frontier—how Barcelona managed to resist as long as this is a wonder. A third kick to the Spanish Government from the Western democracies came during that same month of June, when the £7,500,000 of gold belonging to the Bank of Spain was

"sequestered" in Paris. The Court which judged the case declared itself "incompetent," and the matter was passed on to another Court—which meant a delay of one year! After the Volunteers Plan—as everybody expected it to be—had proved a washout, the Left in France demanded a reopening of the Catalan frontier, but in vain. The "temporary" closing of the frontier remained permanent.

Not that Mussolini was any nicer to the French as a result. Far from it. He kept on saying that if they dared to open the frontier, it would mean a general war—exactly what Mr. Chamberlain told Mr. Attlee last week.

And food? Three weeks ago it was announced, with a great display of generosity and humanitarian sentiment, that 45,000 tons of flour would be sent by the French Government to the hungry people of Barcelona. Two days before the fall of Barcelona only 700 tons had left. No doubt, the refugees are now being fed; but it might have made a great difference if they had been fed while still in Spain.

So the whole Anglo-French policy in relation to Spain seems perfectly clear. London and Paris have been consciously co-operating in the destruction of the Spanish Republicans—for the sake of Italy's friendship. The French, it is true, were not unanimous. M. Daladier was often greatly worried by the turn things were taking. When, after Mr. Chamberlain's visit to Rome, Blum called on Daladier and pointed to the terrible danger to France of an Italian victory in Spain, Daladier seemed to be much upset, and left Blum with the impression that he might make an eleventh-hour effort to help the Spanish Government. But on the same day Daladier received a visit from the British Ambassador, who said in effect: "Mussolini has promised to withdraw his volunteers once Franco has won the war. Mr. Chamberlain believes what Mussolini says. In spite of all the violations on the other side Britain is sticking to non-intervention. Are *you* going to pursue a policy different from ours?" Daladier hesitated for a while; but Bonnet returned from Geneva and said: "Of course not. We shall do nothing to upset Anglo-French solidarity." And the Cabinet agreed with him. M. Bonnet believed, and still believes, that, in spite of all the Italian "spitting" on France, Italy's friendship can be won. In December, during the great anti-French campaign in Italy, M. Bonnet did all he could to have all the unpleasant news from Italy toned down in the French press. In the Chamber he was even accused of wanting to conceal Italy's repudiation of the 1935 agreement. He carefully distinguished between Italy's "territorial" and "non-territorial" claims; he has been wanting for some time to send an Ambassador to Burgos. After seeing Lord Halifax at Geneva, he gave a very optimistic account of the Rome visit to the French press. In short, he was hoping to come to some kind of terms with both Italy and Franco Spain, and was greatly encouraged in this policy by Mr. Chamberlain. Germany, in the meantime, he probably hoped (and such hopes were openly voiced in a large part of the press) would find plenty to do in Eastern Europe, and would not bother about the West—or about the Mediterranean for that matter. The *Matin* was publishing rapturous articles about the Great Ukraine. It was a policy of sorts, and even a consistent policy—on condition that Germany moved East, and took no interest in the West and the Mediterranean. But this condition has not been fulfilled.

And at the same time, another thing happened which must have been a disappointment to M. Bonnet. M. Daladier, infuriated by Italian abuse, and by Italy's "claims" on Tunisia and Corsica, went off on a triumphant tour to North Africa, and made several apeeches in which he said in effect that Italy could go to hell. No territorial claims, no non-territorial claims, nothing! The Radical Congress on January 8th passed a unanimous resolution about the complete integrity of the French Empire, and the safety of the Empire routes; and it called unanimously on the Government to exercise the utmost vigilance about Spain and the Baleatics, and not to tolerate any Italian threat to these Empire routes; while last Thursday, on the day Barcelona fell, a similar resolution was passed unanimously by the Chamber, after a dramatic speech by M. Daladier—"Not an inch of territory, not a single one of our rights." Bonnet was not pleased with the speech at all; for how was he going to make friends with Italy now? But it was in vain; Daladier and the whole Chamber felt that it was no use grovelling to Italy any longer. Bonnet's policy of concessions *is* a policy—a policy of no-war-at-almost-any-price; Daladier's No-nothing-To-hell is another policy, which is perfectly understandable after the insults poured on France for months by the Italians. Only the advocates of the To-hell policy might have thought of it sooner. They should have thought of the Empire and of the Empire routes not now, but last June, before closing the Catalan frontier to armaments. With the Spanish Government still in firm possession of Barcelona, how much easier it would have been to defend the Empire routes, and to say No and To hell to Italy! At the Radical meeting just before the Chamber vote Daladier is reported to have said that if the Italians did not clear out of Spain, France would occupy Minorca and the Spanish zone of Morocco, and would do so with British support. One wonders . . .

How is Franco going to behave? Is he going to eat out of the British hand that helped him on to victory? Our pro-Franco papers, and their equivalents in France, are looking rather puzzled and embarrassed. Are they beginning to feel that they have been backing the wrong horse? That although the horse has won, no money will be paid? No doubt, if I were Franco, I should be insulted by some of Mussolini's latest speeches—for instance, when he said that the Italian volunteers were like the first violin in an orchestra; if the first violin is no good, the whole orchestra is no good. But perhaps Franco doesn't mind. And what is to happen if Italy faithfully fulfils her pledge to Mr. Chamberlain and withdraws all her troops, but Majorca becomes a powerful naval base of Germany's and Italy's new Spanish ally, a loyal partner of the Berlin-Rome-Barcelona axis, and with a country more or less run by German and Italian or German-trained officials; what then? And if Germany, turning away from the Ukraine, has suddenly asked for colonies instead, is it not because, like Italy, she feels that the fall of Barcelona has immensely strengthened the Berlin-Rome axis in the Mediterranean? Was there not something ominous in the very absence of any reference to Spain in Hitler's speech?

Paris, Tuesday. ALEXANDER WERTH

A LONDON DIARY

DOES the expulsion of Sir Stafford Cripps mean a split in the Labour Party? If so, it will be generally regarded as a calamity by most people on the progressive side of politics, including, I think, the more able and far-sighted of the Labour leaders. Nor did Sir Stafford ever intend anything of the sort himself. Most of the people I have spoken to this week think that Sir Stafford did not choose his moment well and are critical of his tactics. But they are much more sure that the Executive has acted very precipitately in expelling him. The fissure in the Party is not as deep as it appears at first glance, for some of the most influential members of the Executive were not at all opposed to constituency arrangements such as Sir Stafford suggested, and some of them, I believe, might even have been willing to have the matter thrashed out again at a special conference if that would have finally settled the issue. But Sir Stafford sees the imminent prospect of the Labour Party dwindling into an adjunct of the National Government as the war emergency grows, and feels, I take it, that there is no time to wait for the conversion of a majority of the Executive to a toleration of a few Popular Front candidates. Sir Stafford is rather like Gandhi. He takes his stand on a question of ethical principle and refuses to budge. I doubt if any number of defeats would make him call off his agitation for a Popular Front. He believes that it is the wish of the majority of the rank and file; he has a

large minority of the constituency parties with him and a considerable body of Trade Union support as well. A conference vote would not settle the matter in his view, because the bloc vote of the big Trade Unions, which would disguise his minority support among the organised workers, would be used to steamroller any conference. In the circumstances I am not surprised that a compromise in the Executive proved impossible. The question now is whether Sir Stafford and his supporters will be able to mobilise enough mass support for the Party Conference at Whitsun to make the Executive see the wisdom of compromise. I hope they will do this in any case, for it would be absurd, when so many of the Party leaders are really in agreement about the need for electoral arrangements, that the Party should split on what would be presented as a personal issue.

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Every Fascist speech is part of the tactics in a great game. It is designed to frighten the rich and undermine the reasonable. But why, thoughtful people may have asked as they heard Hitler on Monday, can he score so many points against us? It is true that Versailles was a bad peace and that France played the game of power politics and then lost both worlds by not having the pluck to carry it through. It is true that we still have nearly two million unemployed, and it is no adequate answer to point out that Hitler's method of getting rid of the unemployed is to reduce wages, drill young men in labour camps, put his opponents into concentration camps and omit, for statistical purposes, those whom he deprives of a livelihood. Our leaders will never be able to answer Hitler convincingly until they have lost their hankering after pre-war "normalcy" and shown that democracy can itself be dynamic. Our failure is not so much in arms as in lack of belief in ourselves. With what face can we prate about democracy with the murder of Republican Spain before our eyes? There is much that is good in our colonial administration, but should we not have a better case if we did something about the appalling poverty of India and really developed our colonies in the interests of the native inhabitants? What does our talk of "democracy" mean otherwise? Hitler fastens upon our weaknesses for propaganda purposes and we need not be deceived by his tactics. But the thing that all democrats should be shouting from the housetops is that democracy has in it a vital principle in which we believe and that we are determined to apply that principle wherever it is in our power. If democracy just means trying to cling to dividends it will not survive. The only satisfactory answer to Hitler is for the democracies to make themselves into places which people want to boast about more loudly than Hitler boasts of the achievements of his slave state.

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People are asking the significance of the trade conversations between Germany and the Soviet Government. Are they a sign that Stalin and Hitler are coming to some agreement for neutrality in case of war, or are they merely a further proof of Germany's need for raw materials? They are certainly the latter. The approach came from Germany and the U.S.S.R. has always favoured trade agreements with other countries whatever their ideologies. But there is more in it than this. Certain business interests in Britain have recently agitated against the Anglo-Russian trade agreement of 1934, in which the U.S.S.R. pledged itself to spend in the London market all the proceeds of its imports to Britain. The bulk of this expenditure in London has actually been on Empire products. Recently, presumably from a mixture of political and economic motives, the F.B.I. and the Chambers of Commerce have denounced the present agreement and approached the Board of Trade on the matter. They demand in particular that Russia should buy more British and less Empire goods. Germany may well have decided that this is a particularly favourable moment to press her trade rivalry with Britain on the Eastern front. If the Anglo-Russian Treaty is being attacked the U.S.S.R. may be more inclined to divert some of its trade from Britain to Germany. Whether the economic approach involves a political change one can only guess. Russia is still bound by the Franco-Soviet Pact, but the deliberate exclusion of the U.S.S.R. from the Munich settlement and the recent activities of M. Bonnet in Paris may well have made Stalin, that highly realistic politician, wonder whether neutrality with Germany is not better value than alliance with the Western Powers. The British and French Governments, after all, have been hoping to save themselves by encouraging Hitler to go East; why should not Stalin, who is having some very tough negotiations with the Japanese on the other side, return the compliment and suggest to Hitler that the capitalist democracies are easier game than the U.S.S.R.? I do not believe that any such engagement has yet been entered into, but I take no account of people who say that a German-Russian *rapprochement* is impossible. Power politics may always override ideological differences, and though Russia and Germany are poles apart (forgive the pun), the immediate interests of both Powers may seem best served by a realistic agreement.

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Preparations for the "Autobahn" from the German frontier to Chust are being pushed ahead. (Ironically enough, Bata tried for years to get this project through for purely commercial reasons, but was refused.) A number of Prague papers continue to put out propaganda for a Greater Ukraine; and the Soviet Ambassador has protested, reminding the Czechs that the Treaty is still technically in force. Oddly enough, he has been supported by a declaration from the White Russian, General Denikin, that he would prefer to make common cause with the Bolsheviks rather than connive at the dismemberment of his native country through the Germans. To these reports several additions must be made. The first is funny. The Germans, it will be recalled, allowed two parties to remain in Czechoslovakia—the Government Party and the Opposition. The growth of the Opposition Party has been so rapid that every effort is now being made to stop new adherents because, if it gets too big, it will be suppressed. The other additions are not funny. Dr. Chvalkovsky, the Czech Foreign Minister, was recently haled to Berlin, soundly rated for one or two democratic sentiments which have eluded censorship, and summarily ordered to renounce the Soviet Pact, "show open disinterestedness" in the pact with France and join the anti-Comintern pact. The Czechs still stubbornly hold to what remains of their democracy and a tug-of-war goes on all the time between Prague and Berlin. They do not like the *Gleichschaltung* of the Czech army or the proposal for an "independent" Ruthenian army, and they object to Chust being full of German agents and a centre of propaganda for a Greater Ukraine. They would resist Fascism if they could, but it is hard to see how they can long avoid practical absorption in the Reich. Strange to remember that we have guaranteed the frontiers of this Nazi province!

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Just as it is cheaper to consult a doctor than to dose oneself with patent medicines, it is cheaper to employ an architect than to be content with even the most honest of contractors. Yet the Paddington Borough Council have decided to entrust a large working-class rehousing scheme to the Borough Engineer. The result cannot be more unsightly than some works by well-known architects, but neither can it be as good-looking as a good architect could make it. The chief objection is practical. The three housing schemes already executed by the Paddington Borough Council, social workers inform me, are so planned as to make a lot of unnecessary work for the women living there. Not to make an architect responsible is to disregard the claims alike of economy, amenity and efficiency. The horrible houses run up by speculative builders around London form a glaring contrast to the often very agreeable building schemes planned for Councils by experienced architects. What answer has the Paddington Borough Council to the charge that it is setting a bad example?

Illustrations of the results of Nazi trade methods in the Balkans. You sell what you have and take what the Germans have to spare. In Bulgaria just now optical instruments are cheaper than anywhere else in the world, while the Jugo-slavs are equipped with enough aspirins and mouth-organs to last them for years.

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Capt. MacLean's resignation from the Air Force was a damaging blow to the Air Ministry, and it trickled out in Fleet Street that the *Evening Standard* would publish articles by him making serious allegations. Hence the counter-propaganda in Monday's press. The *Telegraph* soberly and, I think, accurately, said that Britain was now producing about 400 planes a month. The Air Correspondent of the *Daily Herald*, however, believes in doing propaganda thoroughly. He announced that our production "is nearing the old war-time peak of 3,000 planes a month." CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Charles Fleet.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Choosing his title from the line of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, made immortal by Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Philip Gibbs has presented us with a really first-rate novel dealing with the crisis of last September.—Mr. Peter Belloc in *Daily Sketch.*

People need not be surprised at a good deal of sleeping going on in the House of Commons, said Sir George Hume, M.P., at a meeting last night at Greenwich, which he has represented since 1922. "You get weary at times, and in the atmosphere of the House it is very difficult to keep awake," he said. "But the public do not seem to be able to appreciate our difficulties. Some of the best Members are the silent ones."—*Daily Telegraph.*

Robert Burns was a prototype of Neville Chamberlain and would have undoubtedly ousted Lord Halifax from the Foreign Secretaryship had he been alive to-day, declared the Rev. M'Intosh Mowat, Dundee, when proposing the "Immortal Memory" at Montrose Burns Club gathering last night.—*Glasgow Bulletin.*

Because he does not want to die with his boots on, Mr. J. C. Lister, aged fifty-four, of Listerdale, near Rotherham (Lancs), has for eight years been going about with his bootlaces untied. His idea is that when the time comes for body and soul to part company, he'll be able to kick his boots off. . .—*Daily Mirror.*

So the observer must not only navigate, but must be able to aim and drop the bombs and, when attacked, to use the rear machine gun. Young men who wish to apply for this most desirable job should write to: The Under-Secretary of State for Air.—*Flight.*

THE FREEDOM OF MOOR, MOUNTAIN AND COAST

A PERSON visiting the Central Station at Manchester on a sunny Sunday morning might well suppose that the city was in fear of invasion, and that an exodus of refugees was in progress. He would be wrong. Looking closely, he would see that all the supposed refugees were reasonably young and vigorous; in fact that they were not refugees at all, but only ramblers escaping from Manchester. From 7.30 onwards the station is alive with them. Rucksacks are piled on the platforms; hobnails clink on the stone; sandwiches bulge from the pockets of tweed coats. By half-past nine the station is empty; the trains have taken them away to Edale and Chinley and Hope for a day on the Derbyshire moors. From each of the great northern towns there is a similar Sunday exodus.

It is, I submit, impossible not to regard this exodus with approval. Taking them by and large, our northern industrial cities are the ugliest agglomerations of brick and mortar with which mankind has ever defaced the surface of the earth, fitting monuments to the mean spirit of trivial profit-making which engendered them. For a hundred years men and women stayed in these places because they must, worked in them, played in them, and on Sundays, when piety forbade games, lounged in their streets and waited for the pubs to open. To-day, hiking has replaced beer as the shortest cut out of Manchester.

Between Manchester and Sheffield there are some 215 square miles of moorland, a great belt of spacious country, empty save for a few moorland villages. Some parts, as where Kinderscout raises its ugly head some 2,000 feet above sea level, are grim and bleak; others are a spread of bracken and purple heather cleft by deep valleys with fast-running streams. This country is in the highest degree exhilarating; it tones up both spirit and body. And, appropriately, it lies in the heart of the most thickly populated area in England—stretching on the east to the gates of Sheffield and the urban agglomerations which sprawl over the south of Yorkshire, on the west almost to Manchester and the teeming populations of the cotton towns. It would be difficult to imagine a more admirable playground for these close-penned city folk, as invigorating as their towns are depressing, as wide as they are cramped, as beautiful as they are ugly.

Yet of the total area all but 1,212 acres is closed to the public; 109,000 acres are in private ownership and sacred to the preservation of grouse; 39,000 acres are owned by local authorities some of whom mysteriously debar the citizens, whom they are supposed to represent, from access to the land of which, as citizens, they are owners. Over all this stretch of country the hand of the keeper lies heavy. Walkers are frowned at by notice boards and everywhere trespassers will be prosecuted. On Sundays hundreds of walkers are carefully shepherded along the public footpaths. In the whole district there are only twelve of these which are over two miles in length, and on fine Sundays you will see a continuous file of walkers following one behind the other, for all the world as if they were a girls' school taking the air in "crocodile."

It is primarily from this district of the Peak, supported by the Highlands, that the demand for access embodied in the Access to Mountains Bill has arisen. The Bill is a hoary old parliamentary stager which has come up session after session—it has been introduced at least five times since the war—without, apparently, the slightest hope of success.

And then last session a miracle happened. Mr. Creech Jones, having drawn lucky in the ballot, introduced the Bill and to everybody's surprise, it passed its Second Reading. Briefly, the Bill provided that no owner or occupier of uncultivated mountain or moorland should be entitled to exclude any person walking thereon for the purposes of recreation or art or scientific study.

When the new session begins, the Bill goes into Committee and, provided that substantial agreement can be obtained, the Government is prepared to give facilities for a Third Reading.

What the Lords will say, the Lords alone know; but even Lords can be squared.

It is not to be supposed that the Bill which will be discussed in Committee and will, with luck, obtain a Third Reading, is the same old stager of past Parliaments. Since Mr. Creech Jones's Bill received its Second Reading, negotiations have been proceeding behind the scenes, negotiations with local authorities, with Government Departments, with ramblers' organisations—very strong, these last, in the north, and also very determined on the subject of access—above all, negotiations with landowners, negotiations which are in the highly competent hands of Sir Lawrence Chubb. In one respect, the scope of the Bill has been widened. In its revised form, it includes not only mountains and moorlands, but downs, common land, cliffs and foreshore. The cliffs and the foreshore are a highly important addition. The exclusion of the public from access to the coast is one of the most distressing features of the rape of modern England. Coastguard paths are enclosed, stretches of cliff are built over, a "sea-faring people" is not allowed to reach its sea. If this addition can be sustained, a

great step will have been taken towards safeguarding such amenities as remain to us.

But something, it is obvious, will have to be done to meet the objections of landowners. These are based largely on the alleged harm done by walkers to shooting rights and interests. In the breeding season the feet of the walker, it is said, disturb the old birds, who either do not lay or do not sit. Grouse subject to interruption by walkers do not, it is said, grow plump; on the contrary, they grow suspicious, restless and neurotic. And therefore? Therefore they are not such good targets for the guns of sportsmen. (A fact of some importance this, when the "sportsman" is only a stockbroker on holiday.)

On the other side, it is urged that, where grouse moors are already thrown open to the public, as has been done, for example, by Sir Charles Trevelyan, the size of the sportsman's bag is in no way diminished.

Into matters of such deep and technical controversy it ill becomes a layman to enter. Whether the objections of the landowners are well-founded, or whether, as seems likely, they are merely the expressions of vestigial, feudal possessiveness—"we do not want these 'townees' all over our land"—they will be brought and will have to be met.

Various suggestions are in the field. There are proposals that access shall be granted only to members of accredited organisations, or only during certain seasons of the year. One proposal would restrict access during April, May and June. Another would add August and September. The method of meeting the landowners which, at the moment, seems likely to be most fruitful, is to insert a clause in the Bill providing for application by a landowner to restrict access, on the ground that his interests are liable to be injuriously affected. Upon receipt of such application, the Minister of Health or Agriculture shall give notice to the appropriate local authority and, if he thinks fit, hold an enquiry locally to consider whether the application shall be upheld. This suggested procedure is modelled on a clause in the Law of Property Act, 1925 (Section 193), which confers a similar right of demand to restrict access upon owners of common lands. In reply to the obvious objection that every owner of a shooting moor will immediately make application for restriction, it is pointed out that the number of applications which have been made during the thirteen years' life of the Law of Property Act has been negligible, although some of the commons to which the Act applies are in fact shooting moors.

Other difficulties are being raised by local authorities owning reservoirs on open moors, anxious to exclude walkers from the whole catchment area which feeds the reservoir. Why? Because, after Croydon, every local authority is extremely sensitive on the subject of water pollution, and ramblers might pollute the reservoirs. They might even carry germs of infection on their boots.

But does not London draw its supply from the Thames, and does not the Thames run through Oxford and Reading? It does. What then of the dangers of the pollution of London's water supply by the rather numerous dwellers in Oxford and Reading? And as for boots, do not sportsmen and gamekeepers also wear boots?

I mention these objections by local authorities because they serve to illustrate the enormous variety of the interests, vested and otherwise (the motorists, for example, are objecting, saying in effect "if ramblers, why not cars?") which are being marshalled to prevent people from wandering at large for purposes of recreation on mountains and moors.

And yet, thanks to the international situation, I think that the Bill will go through. It required a war to procure the vote for women, and we only got the Daylight Saving Bill in order that we might have more daylight in which to make and to use instruments of slaughter. Similarly with access. Our young men, it is thought, may shortly be required to pit themselves against the fit young men of another country. We do not want to fight the Germans with a C3 population, and accordingly we are all, these days, for National Fitness. Now there is little point in bidding a people be fit, if you deprive them of the conditions in which fitness can be attained, just as there is a certain embarrassment in bidding them fight to defend a land from which, even when it is uncultivated, they are debarred. And so, I repeat, with luck the Bill will go through.

C. E. M. JOAD

CRITICISED

As I was dipping into the selection from the Goncourt *Journal*, made a good many years ago by Julius West, I was struck by the evidences it contains of the intensity of the old war between authors and critics, and I could not help wondering whether this old war has not lost a good deal of its bitterness in the present century. In some former generations authors seem to have looked on critics as a race apart, and a particularly vile race at that. The critic was a hired assassin of reputations. He had no genuine love of literature and he devoted a great part of his energies to preventing new literary masterpieces from reaching the public they deserved. If he did happen to be honest, he was probably stupid—an academic blockhead whose taste had been moulded by tradition and who disliked new genius, not because it was genius but because it was new and therefore unintelligible to him. Few kind things have been said about critics by authors except by authors who were critics themselves.

It may seem strange that the attacks of so contemptible a band should have rankled like this in the breasts of authors, but there were good enough reasons for this. Hostile criticism may injure the sales of a book or a ticket for a play, and, apart from this, even an author has pardonable vanity which craves for the sunshine of recognition. And besides this, many writers, next to being loved, enjoy being hated, and extract pleasure as well as pain from the thought that they have bitter enemies. There is the purr of self-approval as well as the sigh of misery in Edmond de Goncourt's comment on the critical attacks on one of his books. "Well," he reflects, "I shall be attacked and denied up to the day of my death, and probably for several years after. I must admit that this causes me a sort of inward sadness, which translates itself into a pain in the arms and legs—a physical fatigue which needs and demands sleep."

Even after the unexpectedly good reception of one of his plays, this unhappy author obviously is made considerably less unhappy by Zola who, at the end of the performance, congratulates him on "being opposed with violence." And Rosny cheers him up by adding: "They do hate and detest you. It can't be imagined how enraged they are against you in the corridors, and it is not the writer so much as the man who is abominated!" Edmond de Goncourt seems to have been elated by this tribute, for he replied with eager acquiescence: "Yes, yes, I know; my separation from the lower order of writers, my attacks upon the Jews who rule over us to-day, my contempt for the crowd of men and women who come to a first night, the honourable course of my existence. . . . That all makes me hated."

Had he been a philosopher it seems to me, he would have realised how fortunate he was in being hated only by the baser elements in the community. If this hatred had brought starvation on him, it would have been another matter. But apparently he had no cause for grumbling on that score, and he might reasonably have luxuriated in the reflection that all that was happening to him was but one more proof of his "separation from the lower order of writers." Those who keep themselves separate from the lower order of writers, however, suffer from a divine discontent that can be satisfied with nothing short of the praise and monetary rewards which, according to widespread report, only the lower order of writers receive. They despise without qualification the popular author with enormous sales and at the same time are wretched because they are not popular authors with enormous sales. This paradoxical attitude of mind has done much to make the life of many an author miserable.

Not that enormous sales alone are enough to make a sensitive author happy. The critics, contemptible though they are, have the power to poison the sweetest honey of success, and there have been great writers, acclaimed not only by their peers but by the multitude, who are as acutely tormented by the brainless jibe of an anonymous critic as though they had been stung by a wasp. It is said that Tennyson was like this and that, even at the height of his triumphs, he was capable of losing a night's sleep because of some disparaging remark made about him by a nobody with a pen. Nearly all writers are agreed that other writers are too sensitive in this respect. Most writers, I should say, are of the opinion that in regard to criticism most other writers have little to complain about. Thus we find Edmond de Goncourt and Turgenev assuring Zola on one occasion, when he is groaning over his failure to gain official recognition, "that he has not much to complain of—that he is doing pretty well for a man who is not yet thirty-five years old." Zola, however, cannot see this. He groans on: "Well, do you want me to talk to you from the bottom of my heart? . . . You will think I am very childish, but so much the worse. I shall never be decorated. I shall never be admitted to the Academy. I shall never have a single one of those distinctions which my talent claims. I shall always be a pariah."

Reading all this, one cannot help thinking that, if critics from Homer's time on had been men with the insight of genius and the charity of saints, the sensitive race of authors would still have found something to groan about. The war between authors and critics, I sometimes suspect, is largely an imaginary affair born in a hypersensitive author's nightmare. It is true that malice has been as common in the history of criticism as in the history of any other form of literature, but authors have too readily attributed malice or some other form of meanness to all unfavourable comments, forgetting that they themselves claim the right to express unfavourable opinions of other authors with perfect candour. There was no malice in Wordsworth's and Keats's hostile attitude to Pope. There was no malice in Lamb's antipathy to Gibbon. Arnold Bennett was entirely genial when he dismissed Dickens in three words: "Can't read him." Edmond de Goncourt showed himself to be as outspoken—and as incompetent—as any professionally provocative critic in his remarks on Shakespeare. "The one thing which annoys me," he wrote, "in the work of the incontestably greatest man of letters of the past is his lack of imagination." He accused Shakespeare and Molière of making innumerable thefts—"thefts which the critics regard as meritorious, but not so I." "Shakespeare," he concluded, after a reference to the thieving Molière, "is another such gentleman: he, too, alas! takes his characters out of old books, and in spite of all the flavouring of genius which he adds to them, it irritates me, I repeat, and I consider that one who invents his own characters is a greater writer. That is why Balzac seems to me the greatest of the great." An author who wrote so candidly about Shakespeare ought surely to have allowed critics the right to be as candid about himself.

He could not do so, however, and he could console himself only by appealing from the verdict of contemporary criticism to the verdict of posterity. "For us," he and his brother proudly told Sainte-Beuve, "there is only one public—not that of the moment, but that of the future"; and, like many another harassed author, he seems to have convinced himself that contemporary criticism is always wrong. A fairly specious case would be made out for this view, and there is no doubt that, especially in the history of poetry, men of genius have often been underestimated by their own age or have had to wait many years for recognition. Contemporary criticism, too, has made mistakes in its worship of false gods as well as in its contempt of true ones. If we remembered only the errors of criticism, we should have to agree that the critics have been a pretty worthless mob.

Is there the same reason to doubt their disinterestedness to-day as there was in the days of Keats? Are they still the enemy—at war with original genius—as they were during the life of Edmond de Goncourt? I fancy there has been a change in this matter. For one thing, most of the critics nowadays are themselves authors or authors in the making. For another, the critical fashion has swung against tradition, and novelty now paves the way to appreciation. It would be interesting to return to earth a century hence and to discover how the critics living in the early nineteenth century have fared in separating the wheat from the chaff of the literature of their time. It is difficult to believe that there is an unrecognised Keats in the world to-day, or that a book as good as Fitzgerald's *Omar* is lying unsold in the booksellers' shops. There has never been an age in which criticism was more friendly to new and experimental literature. I can see few signs of the continuance of the old war between critics and authors. But will the authors agree with me in this? Perhaps, for the moment; but let one or two unflattering reviews of a book by one of them appear, and he will straightway see the critic in the old fashion as an enemy of the light—one of the imps of Satan who have assailed great and good men from the beginning of the world.

Y. Y.

Miscellany

THE BOMBED HAPPINESS

Children, who extend their smile of crystal,
And their leaping gold embrace,
And wear their happiness as a frank jewel,
Are forced in the mould of the groaning bull
And engraved with lines on the face.

Their harlequin-striped flesh,
Their blood twisted in rivers of song,
Their flashing, trustful emptiness,
Are trampled by an outer heart that pressed
From the sky right through the coral breast
And kissed the heart and burst.

This timed, exploding heart that breaks
The loved and little hearts, is also one
Splintered through the lungs and wombs
And fragments of squares in the sun,
And crushing the floating, sleeping babe
Into a deeper sleep.

Its victoried drumming enters
Above the limbs of bombed laughter
The body of an expanding State
And throbs there and makes it great,
But nothing nothing can recall
Gaiety buried under these dead years,
Sweet jester and young playing fool
Whose toy was human happiness.

Stephen Spender

I HAVE A FATHER IN THE PROMISED LAND

They all walked into the pew, pushing a little, but decorously. There were the Grandmother, the Great-aunt Topaz, Aunt Rachel, Uncle Frank, Uncle Stephen and Uncle Andrew. There was also the lovely Miranda, fiancée to Uncle Frank. There was Rose, aged eight, small, curly haired, still wearing the good black in which she had been warmly and suitably dressed following her adored Father's death the year before. They all sat down, then they dropped upon their knees. The uncles remained there for a brief and manly instant. The Grandmother became charged with emotion immediately on closing her eyes. The Aunts communed silently and respectfully for a moment, and Rose stayed down as long as they. On rising they settled themselves in the long pew which curved

at the side of the church. The lovely Miranda, knowing herself the object of interest to her young friends as she sat among her dignified relatives-to-be, gazed pleasantly round, acknowledging charmingly and almost imperceptibly the bright glances that shot to her across the church. Radiant she sat there among her dignified relatives-to-be. The Grandmother gazed at nothing, rapt and suffused by her own inner vision, unaware of the congregation. Rose looked this way, and that, with youthful interest. She noted the bonneted old ladies as they stole to their pews, their plain and bearded husbands, the pretty Miss Moores, the fathers, the mothers, the families that streamed in. Most of them dropped to their knees. Fleetingly she wondered what they all *really* did there. But some, oh horrors, sat smack down and looked round frankly and with interest upon their neighbours. No stained glass shed its warm and romantic radiance upon the congregation. The amenities of coloured windows, pulpits, surplices and the like were not there. Nay, they were suspect, and smacked a little of the delightful worldliness of the Church of England.

A door opened. On to the platform, garnished with chairs and a reading desk, strode the Pastor. When this man of God was sent from Ontario to minister to the West, doubtless the Fathers in Israel shaded their eyes and gazed towards British Columbia. They looked west across the Great Lakes. They looked across the prairies, all wheat, cattle, cowboys and Indians. They looked again across the foothills, the forests, the Rocky Mountains, the mining camps, the saloons, the gambling hells, to the wild shores of the Pacific Ocean where a young and turbulent city was growing. They looked towards the Klondike Rush. They looked, and then they said to each other, " Let us send the Rev. Elmer Pratt, he's just the man for the West." So now here was the Rev. Elmer Pratt, full of zeal, swarthy, black visaged, and violent of feature. Beneath his black hair shone his bright black eyes. Beneath his bright black eyes jutted his large nose. Beneath his large nose sprang and flourished his magnificent black moustaches. Beneath his vigorous chin rose up his high and stiff white collar, with a splendid white four-in-hand tie. The face, coarse and vigorous, was perpetually at war with the sanctity of the starched white collar and tie beneath. He used strange words. Rose, accustomed to the suave tones of her native England, was constantly amazed at the flat and grating voice of the Rev. Pratt. Whereas the ministers of the Gospel to whom she had listened Sunday by Sunday in England since infancy spoke gently of the love of God, the Rev. Elmer Pratt thundered about brothels. She supposed that brothels were places where broth was made and decided that the broth must be very bad, or the Rev. Elmer Pratt would not be so angry. He also spoke about " foaming out your shame upon your city streets " (see Hosea), in a way that made her feel personally responsible, and she thought that he meant the nasty habit of spitting that she had noticed and disliked among men in the streets of this little western town. There seemed to be no other explanation. Many strange things were uttered by the Rev. Elmer Pratt, and little of it did Rose understand. But once his sermons of wrath and denunciation were over, he became a human and kindly man.

This evening as he mounted the platform he was almost in tender vein. He prayed, long and enjoyably. Chiefly he desired God's blessing upon the week of revival services on which the congregation was entering. Much stress was laid upon the Last Chance. For example, it might be that Tuesday night had been selected for some dear brother (or sister) to be saved, and if they stayed away on Tuesday night the chance might pass by forever. This became very important. Rose had never before been to a revival service, in fact, there had been some discussion at home as to whether she was too young to come. But, the Grandmother having been " saved " at the age of five, here she was.

By the time they were again vertical in their seats, the church was filled with a lively emotion. The congregation rose and sang, their thoughts uplifted, " There is a fountain filled with Blood," a terrifying hymn to Rose, because she had seen fountains. Then they sat down, their gaze upon Mr. Pratt. Even the lovely Miranda, her thoughts forcibly removed from her trousseau, gazed upon Mr. Pratt. He became as one a little transfigured by darkness. His grating and powerful voice was subdued, vibrant and touching. His black glances played over the congregation, loving them, frightening them, yearning over them. He held up to them their lives of sin and shame. He showed them the dreadful and almost inescapable doom. Strident his voice rose to the horrors of the hereafter. Softened and vibrating with tenderness he described to them as if he had been there the Kingdom of the Blessed where they fain would be. Did they not, urged the Rev. Elmer Pratt, as a strong inducement, wish to see their Dear Ones who were undoubtedly waiting for them in the Heavenly Home? " Is there no one waiting for you? " thrilled Mr. Pratt. " My brothers, my sisters, have you no one waiting in Heaven for you? Come now," said he, encouragingly, " who has a Father in the Promised Land? Who has a dear, dear Father waiting in the Promised Land? Come now, stand! Stand up now, any person who has a dear, dear Father waiting in the Promised Land; do not be afraid, stand up, ah, bless you, my brother, bless you, my sister! " Thus exhorted, people began to stand up, one here, one there, looking downwards. Rose's heart was ready to burst. Her Father, her dear Father, whom she loved better than anyone on earth, Father with the kind laughing eyes, was waiting, waiting. She slipped to the floor and stood up. " Bless you, my child," said the Rev. Elmer Pratt, kindly.

Rose burst into tears.

" Let us sing," said the Rev. Elmer Pratt. " Let us sing together." And he sang in his grating voice :

I have a Father in the Promised Land,
I have a Father in the Promised Land,
My Father calls me, I must go
To meet him in the Promised Land.

" Come now," said Mr. Pratt, " all those standing, sing :

I have . . .

and everybody sang.

Rose sang sobbingly, sniffingly, to the mute distress of Great-Aunt Topaz, Aunt Rachel, Uncle Frank, Uncle Stephen, Uncle Andrew and the lovely Miranda. The Grandmother, touched and pleased, wept gently beside her.

The song finished. Relieved, the bereaved ones sat down. Rose wiped her eyes.

" Now then," said the Rev. Elmer Pratt, rubbing his hands in a pleased way, " who has a Mother, a dear, dear Mother, waiting for them, waiting to welcome. Stand up, those who have a dear Mother in the Promised Land."

This startled Rose. She had thought the affair was over, and had settled down comfortably in the pew to her grief. But others, the more knowing among the congregation, had suspected this. Sadly Rose stood up again. Her Mother had died when Rose was eighteen months old, at the birth of a little son. In fact, as far as Rose was concerned, she had never had a Mother and felt no grief at her loss. However, there she stood, still weeping for her Father. One by one the people stood. More handkerchiefs came out. The Rev. Elmer Pratt with innocent ghoulish pleasure welcomed and encouraged them as they stood. " Bless you, my brother, bless you, my sister. Bless you, bless you, my child." Thus blessed, they stood, looking downwards. " Let us sing," said Mr. Pratt, let us sing, my dear folks, those who have lost a Mother :

I have a Mother in the Promised Land,
I have a Mother in the Promised Land,
My Mother calls me, I must go
To meet her in the Promised Land.

They sang. " Sit down, sit down," said the Rev. Elmer Pratt. The bereaved ones sat. Well, that was over.

" Has anyone," said the Rev. Elmer Pratt, enquiringly, " lost a dear Brother? " Now this came as a surprise to everybody, and hastily the congregation tried to remember if they had lost a Brother. A bit of mental fumbling here. Rose recollected that Father had once told her that her baby

brother, christened Edward, had died when he was three days old, and lay buried beside her Mother in South Africa. Once only her Father had spoken of his grief. "Did I ever see little Edward, Father?" she had asked. "No, dear," had said her Father. And now, here was little Edward! Did she have to stand up for Edward. He must have been so very small, hardly worth standing for. Time was pressing. Poor little Edward, no one to stand up for him! But, strictly speaking, would little Edward be able to welcome her in the Promised Land, being so very small? This was puzzling, but there was no time for advice. Little Edward won. Rose stood up again. The family looked up in surprise. They had forgotten about little Edward. "Sing, friends," commended the Rev. Elmer Pratt, "sing together":

I have a Brother in the Promised Land,
I have a Brother in the Promised Land,
My Brother calls me, I must go
To meet him in the Promised Land.

They sang. The tune, now familiar, rang out cheerfully. The bereaved ones sang sturdily and without sobs. Apparently, inured as they were to loss, they could more easily support the presence of a brother in the Promised Land.

"Sit down, folks," said Mr. Pratt with real satisfaction. They sat down. Well, thought Rose, I'm down now safely, for I never had a sister. But poor Miranda! Her turn was coming. Rose looked along the pew at the lovely Miranda. Miranda was turning her engagement ring this way and that. She tilted her charming head with its pretty pointed chin. She looked at her ring. Rubies and diamonds, rubies and diamonds. Look up, look up, Miranda, it's your turn next! Miranda looked at the ring and smiled sweetly, dreamily. Only yesterday, as Rose had sat admiring her while she brushed her beautiful hair, they had talked about Miranda's family. "And was that all of you, Aunt Miranda?" Rose had said. "Yes, dear," had said the lovely Miranda, her mouth full of hairpins, "except a tiny, *tiny* baby sister, but she died, stillborn," had murmured the truthful young Miranda through the hairpins. Rose had enquired further. "Did you say 'stillborn'? What does stillborn mean?" Miranda had not answered. Her mouth was full of hairpins. All this Rose now remembered. She looked along the pew. The tiny, tiny sister, stillborn, how sweet! She yearned over Miranda, so soon to be haled to her feet by the inexorable Pratt. Even now he was speaking tenderly, tenderly. "Any person here lost a Sister?" he said, "a dear, dear Sister, stand, stand up!" Heavily, without alacrity, people stood. Rose looked at Miranda. Miranda looked fondly upon her ring. Rubies and diamonds, rubies and diamonds. Oh, the little stillborn sister—forgotten—Miranda, how could you? You couldn't have heard Mr. Pratt! But indeed now the people were singing glibly, pleasantly:

I have a Sister in the Promised Land,
I have a Sister in the Promised Land,
My Sister calls me, I must go
To meet her in the Promised Land.

Rose looked along the pew. Her whole mind besought Miranda. The little stillborn sister! But the lovely Miranda tilted her charming head with its pretty pointed chin the other way, and gazed upon her ring.

Rubies and diamonds, rubies and diamonds.

After the service was over they all walked home.

ETHEL WILSON

PLAYS AND PICTURES

'Design for Living," at the Haymarket

Otto and Leo, devoted to one another, are also devoted to the same woman; she becomes the mistress first of Otto, then of Leo, then again of Otto; next she marries Ernest; then she returns to Otto and Leo, and a happy ending is provided by the prospect of a *menage à trois*. The obvious line for the critic is to dismiss such characters with a few fine phrases about "farmyard morality." But in fact Mr. Noel Coward is dealing with a perfectly serious subject. Love is not the simple emotion extolled by romantic poets and Victorian novelists. It has been not unusual for a man to feel deep affection, and keen desire, for two women simultaneously. But women, it is argued, are different: and Dr. Johnson is only one of a thousand male moralists who have argued that adultery showed excusable weakness in a man, monstrous depravity in a woman. Some women, however, feel about sex much as men do, and to behave like Mr. Coward's heroine is not necessarily to be a slut. It is not looseness that makes the characters in his play so cheap, it is their frivolity and passion for indecent exposure. We become convinced that Otto's pictures and Leo's plays are as vulgar as the furniture shewn to us, designed by Gilda. Moreover, the three main characters are entirely undifferentiated: they talk the same jargon, overwork the same cheap-Alick irony, and wear their hearts on their sleeves, like the latest buttons from Schiaparelli. The story could have been made a serious comedy, or a farce, but Mr. Coward has fallen between two stools. When he jokes, we laugh like mad; but when he is being serious, we are embarrassed. It is not the emotions that are unacceptable, but the way they are expressed. Above all, the play seems regrettably long; the material has been inflated till it bursts. The acting is highly accomplished: Miss Diana Wynyard does everything she should, but lacks spontaneous gaiety, and never suggests an artist or a Bohemian. Mr. Anton Walbrook becomes unintelligible in his louder and faster speeches, and upsets the balance of the play by conveying deep emotion. Mr. Rex Harrison, alone of the three, is precisely in the picture. Miss Dorothy Hamilton and Mr. Alan Webb were quite excellent. Indeed the play would be much richer entertainment if we had less of the heart-aches of the trio, and more of the consternation they cause to ordinary people. The production is admirably rapid, and makes a very agreeable evening.

"The Playboy of the Western World," at the Mercury

Synge's poetic comedy reappears magnificently. From the point of view of the theatre it is faultless, and could serve as a model—for how few plays these days, too few, have this pure theatre quality. The plot operates impalpably, without a hitch: always the unexpected, always the inevitable. The entirety of each character is given—the variations, the twist of each temperament develop the whole. There are gulfs between *The Playboy* and its so-called successors, experiments in folk drama. *The Playboy* is not naturalistic, it is flamboyant; it is anti-naturalistically simplified by superb art. From the first line, it imposes the situation: nothing in it appears preposterous. The language speaks itself. At the Mercury *The Playboy* was played well—too naturalistically, given its character, but with gusto and freshness. The mood was "younger" than Synge can have intended; one or two of the players lacked stature a little, and there could have been more flamboyancy. The later conventions of Irish acting run counter to Synge's idea. Mr. Cyril Cusack's Christy Mahon was wilful, but excellent—his Christy is at once rueful and swaggering; there is less violence than volatility. But he commands, as he should command, the stage. Mr. Tony Quinn and Mr. Harry Hutchinson, also from the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, show a subdued virtuosity as the blameless Shawn Keough and Michael James Flaherty, and Mr. Brefni O'Rorke's Old Mahon made properly fateful entrances. Pegeen Mike should have a touch of the fury in her—she is a woman, and a relentless woman: young Miss Pamela Gibson played her (as she could only play her) as a limpid young girl. It is no fair criticism of Miss Gibson's abilities to complain that she did not fill out her part: within limits, she played firmly and well. But Miss Maire O'Neill's Widow Quinn had a gloomy richness that overtowered Miss Gibson temperamentally. *The Playboy of the Western World* may not be for long at the Mercury, which is a pity. It ought not to be missed. Surely a series of Irish plays should be a safe venture for a West End theatre?

"Old Bones of The River," at the New Gallery.

Pince-nez twisted and mortar-board askew, pedantic, irritable, assertive and genteel, Mr. Will Hay's schoolmaster is a complete comic creation whose natural home is the music-hall. The pity is that no producer has yet learnt how to recreate his essential flavour in terms of the screen. No doubt his films are successful enough—in England; but one would hardly care to exhibit them to an intelligent foreigner as specimens of our national humour; the situations are too mechanically contrived, the exploits and gags too facetious and stale. The Hay films flounder in an indeterminate territory somewhere between realism and

fantasy. His producers attempt to disguise their lack of style and invention by planting Dr. Benjamin Tibbetts in ever more exotic surroundings. This time he is peddling cheap education somewhere in the Edgar Wallace country of West Africa, while his invariable companions, the rotund Graham Moffatt and the senile Moore Marriott, ply an incredibly decrepit paddle-steamer on a crocodile-infested river. Their several and joint adventures are often funny; it is pleasant to see Dr. Tibbetts instructing a class of black boys who know a great deal more than he does, and giving a novel bath to a minute black baby whom he has rescued from human sacrifice: ordinary dusting-powder proving unsatisfactory ("it doesn't match, does it?") the resourceful Doctor suggests cocoa. But these jests are flashes in a pretty large pan, and the film in bulk will be enjoyed only by those who have dined well and feel benevolently receptive. The personality created by Mr. Hay deserves more respect than it gets: Dr. Tibbetts is really something more than a mere target for outlandish misfortunes, he is the embodiment of the sad phrase "keeping up appearances." It would be interesting some day to peer into the reality which he conceals behind that cracked and peeling façade of respectability; what does this schoolmaster do when the last desk has banged and he is left alone in the provincial twilight? Where and how does he spend his evenings? Certainly not in correcting the boys' exercises. There is room for a film on the private life of Dr. Benjamin Tibbetts.

Pictures for Collectors at Tooth's

This miscellaneous exhibition of contemporary English pictures is well worth a visit. The large Paul Nash is one of his most successful works, excellently composed and with a lushness that this painter usually denies himself. The Matthew Smiths are particularly good examples of an uneven artist—the picture of leaves and peaches showing uncommon delicacy of colour. A Still Life by Mr. Duncan Grant is entirely without the heavy-fistedness that has shown itself in some of his recent non-decorative work. It is a great pleasure to see three of our best painters in such first-rate form. Mr. Stanley Spencer's pictures, on the other hand, are likely to dismay some who once admired his work: the skill remains remarkable.

The Greco and Goya at the National Gallery

The Spanish School is not very well represented at the National Gallery, and the Director therefore is specially to be congratulated upon obtaining the loan of Baron Herzog's Grecos and Goyas. The *Agony in the Garden* is one of the Cretan's most spectacular paintings: in it much the same elements are used for a vertical design as appear in the horizontal version of the picture belonging to the Gallery. But the colour is much more audacious, particularly the billow of lurid incredible orange; the paint is more brilliantly handled, and the whole effect more dramatic. Hanging next to this, the *Head of St. James* reveals the subtlety and sensibility that were no less remarkable in Greco than his emotional power. In delicacy of modelling this head compares with the work of the greatest portrait-painters. The head of *St. Andrew* is admirable, but less refined. In the *Annunciation* we again see the great Baroque artist riding in the whirlwind and directing the storm—a strange, beautifully painted work. The *Holy Family* has all the air of a school-piece, a coarsely drawn version of a great design. The Goya *Carnival* is particularly fascinating for its sumptuous texture: the sky and buildings suggest Courbet, the figures Daumier and even Rouault, but the extraordinary audacity of the composition could only be Goya. A very rich and exciting picture.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, February 4th—
- W.E.A. Lecture Social, Common Room, University Building, 7.30.

SUNDAY, February 5th—
- Prof. J. C. Flugel: "Mind and Body—Some New Sidelights on an Old Problem," Conway Hall, 11.
- London Philharmonic Orchestra Concert, Covent Garden, 3.15.
- Prof. J. D. Bernal: "The Social Importance of Science," 153 Finchley Road, 6.15.

MONDAY, February 6th—
- First of Course of Six Lectures on "The Modern Development of Consumers' Co-operation," by G. D. H. Cole, London School of Economics, 7.30.
- A. S. Neill: "Sex and the Adolescent," Conway Hall, 8.
- Public Meeting of the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, Great Hall, University College, 8.15.
- S.P.G.B. Meeting: "Is Pacifism a Failure?" 39 Doughty St., 8.30.

TUESDAY, February 7th—
- W. M. Macmillan: "Africa Emergent," Friends House, 1.20.
- Dr. I. Tannous: "Palestine—the Arab Case," Conway Hall, 7.
- Dr. Norman Leys: "Africa," Morley College, 8.
- First of Course of Six Lectures on "Some Aspects of Woman's Psychology," by Barbara Low, Friends House, 8.15.

WEDNESDAY, February 8th—
- S.C.R. Annual Dinner, Comedy Restaurant, 7.30. Tickets, 7*s.* 6*d.* (members, 6*s.* 6*d.*) from 98 Gower Street, W.C.1.

THURSDAY, February 9th—
- Artists International Association 1939 Exhibition opens at Whitechapel Art Gallery, 12-9.
- R. R. Kuczynski: "Population Statistics," L. S. E., 5.
- Mrs. A. Blanco White: "Pro-Fascist Propaganda—How to Meet It," Livingstone Hall, 8.
- Royal Philharmonic Society Concert, Queens Hall, 8.15.

FRIDAY, February 10th—
- F.P.S.I. Conference: "The World and the Jews To-day," High Leigh, Hoddesdon. Particulars from 4 Fitzroy Street, W.1.
- Six Documentary Films on Everyday Life in Soviet Russia, St. Pancras Town Hall, 8.
- W. J. R. Squance: "Soviet Trade Unions," 153 Finchley Rd., 8.15.

Correspondence

DEMOCRACY IN SWEDEN

SIR,—I recently visited Sweden to study the working of democracy in that country. I found the policy of the present Social Democratic Government, and their very remarkable achievements, to be in startling contrast to those of the British Labour party; and I venture to suggest that what they are doing is worthy of study by everybody in this country who is interested in the efficiency and success of our own democracy.

The basic difference between the Swedish and British Labour parties is simple: the Swedes have consistently put democracy first; they believe that the only way to Socialism is through democracy. That is to say, they have constantly sought to co-operate with any other party which has been prepared to support them in the next steps towards the kind of social order they are aiming at.

It should be explained that there is proportional representation in Sweden, and that there are four main parties—in the order of their size, Socialist, Conservative, Farmer and Liberal. Up to the establishment of the democratic constitution in 1920, the Socialists co-operated constantly with the Liberals.

When they were offered the opportunity of forming a Government in 1932 (being the largest party, with just over 40 per cent. of the votes) they at once accepted it. They did not talk about their "independence"; they gave up for the time being their programmes of nationalisation and of free trade in order to make a bargain for the support of the Farmers Party, with the aim of securing the best possible standard of living (and of purchasing power), both for the workers and for the peasants. Their Government was outstandingly successful for the four-year period of that Parliament; as the result of their policy, they not only achieved a great deal in the way of reduction of unemployment and in improving conditions for the workers and peasants but also got full credit for this achievement, and in the 1936 election they increased their national vote from about 1,000,000 to 1,300,000. They then formed an actual coalition with the Farmers, which is governing to-day. In the elections in September, 1938, the Socialist party again increased their vote, and actually obtained a majority of the whole of the votes in the country. So far as one can judge, especially from the opinions of their opponents, the Government is firmly established; within two years they are likely to have a working majority in the membership of both Houses.

The Social Democratic party is fortunate in having a first-class team in the Cabinet. Like most Swedes, they are moderate and sensible; they are constantly adapting themselves to new situations, and their policy is to concentrate on the next step and not to worry about doctrinaire principles, except the fundamental principle of improving the standards of life of the workers and peasants. While showing such moderation, nobody doubts for one moment that they are sincerely and ably working for the benefit of the under-privileged. And another remarkable thing is that in spite of the moderation of their policy, so widespread is the confidence they inspire that there is no substantial left wing movement, nor at the other end of the scale any Fascist party.

It is hardly necessary to emphasise to readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION the completeness of the contrast between the policies of the Swedish and of the British Labour parties. To give only one example, if the British Labour and Liberal parties had pursued the Swedish policy, the first Labour Government would have stayed in office for three or four years, and Hitler would probably never have risen to power.

In the present situation in Britain, I think it safe to say that the Swedish Labour leaders would quite certainly and unhesitatingly seek an alliance with the Liberals. So far from ejecting Sir Stafford Cripps from the party, they would regard his proposal as perhaps the most sensible of his career!

It may be invidious for a Liberal to assess the relative merits of two Labour parties, but it is quite clear that I, and I think millions of others in this country, would find it very easy to vote for a Labour party pursuing the Swedish policy, and very difficult to vote for the present policy of the British Labour party.

Finally, if the reason why the Labour party will not work with Liberals is that they think non-co-operation is the quickest way to kill them, the following would seem to indicate that the Swedish methods of killing by kindness is much more effective. In considering these figures, it must be borne in mind that Sweden has a large agricultural population consisting mainly of peasant-owners, and that there is a separate Farmers party in that country. One would therefore expect a substantially smaller Socialist vote in Sweden than in England. The facts are as follows:

PERCENTAGE OF LABOUR VOTERS

Sweden		Britain	
1932	41.7	1923	31
1936	45.9	1924	33
1938	50.5	1929	37
		1931	31
		1935	38

Broomcroft,
Didsbury, Manchester. E. D. SIMON

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

SIR,—May I, as one who is not much older than my friend Mr. Crossman, and is more of a Socialist than Mr. Keynes, express a different point of view about Sir Stafford Cripps's move?

I write as a prospective Labour candidate who is dismayed by the present dispute, and considers it the duty of all members of the movement, not to take sides in it, but to work for the healing of the breach as rapidly as possible.

Let us concede for the moment that Sir Stafford is right in arguing that a Popular Front ranging from Communists to dissident Conservatives could bring down the Government at the General Election. Even if this were true, Sir Stafford has not the slightest possibility of bringing about such a Popular Front before the next election. He must know by now the strength—call it the obstinacy, if the word is preferred—of the forces opposed to him in the Labour movement. He must realise that he cannot hope to convert the whole movement in time.

What will happen is that the Labour movement will split from top to bottom; tongues and pens that have been loosed will say and write words that will be priceless gifts to our opponents; we shall be more concerned to discomfit each other than to dethrone Mr. Chamberlain; and, if Hitler permits, Mr. Chamberlain will seize the opportunity of going to the country—as his predecessors chose the occasion of another revolt led by Sir Stafford to go to the country in 1935. The result will be precisely that which Sir Stafford professes to fear—Mr. Chamberlain's Government will be safely entrenched in power for another five years at least; and I entirely agree with Sir Stafford that such a calamity may mean the end of democracy and social progress in this country for generations.

I do not think this analysis can be seriously doubted. Therefore I ask Sir Stafford and his friends: "For the sake of dubious alliances with other parties, is it worth splitting the Labour Party and making a present of the election to Mr. Chamberlain?"

But Sir Stafford, in my submission, is not right. The Labour movement is caught on the horns of a dilemma. If it enters into an association with the Communist Party, however diluted by other elements, it will lose at least a million votes and will fare worse than it would do in isolation (I know Sir Stafford will not agree with this, but he doesn't know the extent to which Communism is still feared by the small-property-owning classes). If the Labour Party entered into an alliance with Liberals, excluding Communists, several big Unions would probably disaffiliate, the constituencies would be split in two, and the Party would again do worse in association with other elements than it would by itself.

Faced with this dilemma, the National Executive are right, in my contention, in preserving the Party from formal alliances of any kind with other parties. They would not help us to defeat Mr. Chamberlain—the supreme need of the hour.

On the other hand, it is foolish for Labour and Liberals to fight each other where this may mean giving the seat to a Tory. This is the compromise I would like to urge. Will Sir Stafford call off his campaign if the National Executive will take effective steps to secure this end?

The question is almost entirely between Labour and Liberals. (For my own part I would agree that the present I.L.P. and Communist members be not opposed if their parties do not put up candidates elsewhere.) Such a working arrangement between Labour and Liberals can do all that a full-blooded Popular Front can do, and has none of its disadvantages. There would be no compromises on policy, no sacrifices of principle and no bargaining about the *personnel* of hypothetical future Governments. A joint committee would have to be set up to recommend the most suitable candidate in constituencies where either Labour or Liberal should stand down. At this point sacrifice will be necessary from someone, but it is a sacrifice that should be willingly made.

Will all Labour M.P.s, prospective candidates, and party presidents and secretaries who wish to see this solution write to me to say so? If the requisite volume of support is forthcoming, I shall not fail to bring it to the notice of the persons concerned.

16a, John Street,
Adelphi,
London, W.C.2. IVOR THOMAS
(Prospective Labour Candidate,
Spen Valley.)

SIR,—Mr. Crossman has once more stated the case for the Popular Front. His exposition is clearer than most but, to me at any rate, no more convincing. It seems evident, indeed, that the more concretely the case is stated the more impractical it is seen to be.

It is conceivably arguable, on legalistic grounds, and as Mr Crossman maintains, that Sir Stafford had a right to circulate his statement direct to the constituencies over the heads and against the overwhelming majority of the Executive of which he was a member; but is Mr. Crossman prepared to extend his justification to the time and manner chosen by Sir Stafford, with his usual lack of judgment? Mr. Crossman's first paragraph is, indeed, extremely tendentious. There obviously could never have been any difficulty in "securing" a majority in the Executive against Sir Stafford; for the Executive is elected by the constituencies, and the constituencies have over and over again expressed their determination to have nothing to do with the Popular Front. The Executive is merely carrying out its mandate; Sir Stafford refuses to do so.

If Mr. Crossman really believes that nobody takes seriously the argument that the Popular Front would water down the Socialist programme, he is not only strangely out of touch with general opinion in the Party, but he is blinding himself to facts and experience. He makes Spain the test; but has he forgotten that it was a Popular Front Government in France which laid down the lines of the present French policy in regard to Spain? Has he forgotten that it was the division within the Popular Front in Spain which brought Franco to the gates of Madrid? Has he forgotten that it was Sir Stafford, who, in a quite recent stage of his somewhat erratic development, came out strongly in opposition to sanctions against Italy? Has he forgotten the pitiful spectacle of a Labour Government dependent on Liberal support?

When Mr. Crossman speaks of the conflict between North and South, and between the Trade Unions and middle-class Socialists, he is on secure ground, and his suggestions for resolving these conflicts would be welcome. (I would remind him, however, that both he and I have been selected as parliamentary candidates in predominantly Trade Union constituencies.) But when he speaks of a conflict between the Old Guard and the younger generation, he seems to me to be going beyond his brief. The conflict that he sees is not one between generations, but between intellectual and psychological attitudes. It is a conflict between those who are prepared to wait a little longer in order to achieve enduring gains, and those who are prepared to let the future go hang for the sake of an immediate and short-term amelioration.

Supporters of the Popular Front talk as though the winning of seats and the formation of a new Government were ends in

themselves. They seem to forget that merely to turn out Mr. Chamberlain and his kaleidoscope of a Cabinet would serve no purpose in itself, but only if they make way for a Government with a clear-cut programme and one capable of putting that programme into effect. A Government divided within itself, incapable because of allied opposition of implementing at home the policy it wants to carry out abroad, might be a menace greater even than Mr. Chamberlain in his most Brummagem mood. Moreover, has anyone the slightest idea what Sir Stafford's positive policy would be if he were at the head of a Popular Front Government? Mere negation is no policy. Here is an example of his constant fleeing from reality: I remember hearing him state in public, at the time he was objecting to the support given by the Labour Party to the rearmament programme, that if a Labour Government were in power and were attacked by the Fascist Governments, it would then be time enough to rearm!

When one's heart and mind, one's feelings of decency and honour, are being betrayed day by day, it is not easy to preserve a sense of proportion and a due perspective; but we must do so if a lasting Socialism is to be attained; and nothing is more sure than the utter undoing for a generation of every Socialist hope if the public again witnesses the spectacle of a Labour Government in which the Labour Movement is not the master of its house.

THEODORE BESTERMAN,
Labour Prospective Parliamentary Candidate
for Warwick and Leamington

SIR,—One might have thought until to-day that the nadir of political ineptitude has been reached by the present Government. It appears, however, that one would have been wrong, for I read in this evening's paper that Sir Stafford Cripps has been expelled from the Socialist Party, which can in this respect apparently give points even to the Cabinet.

I can think of only three possible reasons for the Party's expulsion of Sir Stafford:

1. Jealousy of its most able member.
2. A determination that Party discipline shall override all wider issues.
3. Faith in the capacity of "pure Socialism" alone to retrieve the rapidly declining fortunes of this country.

The first of these reasons needs no comment. The second can only be valid when the rebellious member opposes the fundamental principles for which his Party stands. I have never yet heard it suggested that Sir Stafford has given up a single one of his Socialist ideals. Indeed, is this not the same Sir Stafford Cripps who was recently taken to task for being too extreme in his views? On the other hand, it would be impossible to count the number of occasions on which the Socialist Party has in one form or other given utterance to the slogan: "The National Government must go." When, however, its ablest member makes this sentiment the corner-stone of a short-term policy, he is expelled!

As for the third reason, since the Socialist Party has persistently told us that the continuance in office of the present Government will bring speedy disaster upon the country and at the same time rejects the only policy that can possibly turn the present Government out, one is led to the conclusion that the Socialists are prepared to allow the country to drift into defeat in order to erect a "purely Socialist" State upon the ruins. If this is so, I see little difference in principle between the Socialist Party and M. Flandin who is said to be prepared to welcome Hitler in Paris if he will enforce a fifty-hour week.

On the rare occasions when I have been able to exercise my right to vote, I have used it in favour of the Socialist Party. But if this is the best they can do, I for one, shall prefer to see the fortunes of the country entrusted to the Conservative Party, which at least has a long tradition of successful "muddling through" and has in its ranks a few men of ability and personality whom it has the good sense not to expel for "heresy" and who may one day shake the present Cabinet out of its inertia.

K. F. A. JOHNSTON

3 Temple Gardens,
Temple, E.C.4.

CONVERSATION PIECE

SIR,—For three or four hours this evening I've been listening—and joining in—to the conversation of my brother and a friend. The talk ranged on many subjects, but started with politics and ended with politics. One of us has more than the ordinary knowledge of world affairs, but even so we looked at the situation in the same light.

As I listened I wondered how many other people were sitting, as we were, discussing our dissatisfaction with conditions generally. Perhaps we did it with greater vehemence and stronger language than many, but it wasn't all destructive talk, and the constructive suggestions cut through to the heart of things unblunted by Party loyalties, vested interests, place-seeking and all the other political shibboleths. Blasting queries and comments flew about—

"What's happening now—will there be another crisis in February when the German Army manoeuvres take place?"

"Yes—the issue will be Holland or Tunis and we'll rat again—won't even mobilise the Navy this time. We aren't a step more ready than we were in September last. A year ago we were in a position at least to bargain with the dictators, but we aren't any longer—don't see what we can do now."

"No, the only possible thing to do, if we had any leaders, would be to really pep-up defence work—start off by giving the unemployed say another 15*s*. a week and set every one of them who can do a day's work on to this work full steam ahead—autobahn roads, as in Germany, to get people quickly out of this death trap city. . . ."

". . . And don't our roads just want seeing to! I had to go down to Malvern last week—a supposedly first-class road, but in third-rate condition in many parts. . . ."

". . . making bomb-proof shelters such as they have made in Spain under the terrible conditions of war, and which we could and should do more effectively whilst we still have peace.

"Then when every war preparation has been speeded up—mobilise industry. . . ."

". . . Yes, you've said it, mobilise industry—to hell with the aircraft ring (what the so-and-so's happened to our 3 billions for rearmaments?)—force aircraft firms (names mentioned here with adjectival qualifications and mutters about 140 per cent. dividends for shareholders, making Woolworths look amateurs) to really get on with the job and fulfil Government orders *at once*, instead of putting them aside in order to enter into competition with other countries and thus be enabled to put English engines into Italian Caproni's so that democracy can be shot at. . . ."

"Then when this is well advanced—call the journalists of the nations together (first secretly tipping off such nations as U.S.A. and France that remarks are not intended for them, just a Great Power Parade)—call the journalists to Downing Street—no posh spread or fancy trimmings—just grim unqualified statements—'Hands off the British Empire and every least subject. Let him who dares touch the hair of a British subject or take an inch of ground!'"

"Oh boy! oh boy! would it go down—*it would!* You'd have U.S.A. and France cheering themselves hoarse and all the little nations—Scandinavian, etc.—taking heart and joining in the rah! rah! And would we have something to be proud of once again (you wouldn't have to plead with us to give a bit of national service), instead of the vile worrying unease and uncertainty. Instead of wondering what plans for the future are worth making—feeling ashamed of the very moderate standard of living one has when one hears of distressed areas and unemployment generally—people starving. . . ."

". . . *Hear* of it you say? I was in Jarrow before Christmas and *saw* it—saw *skeletons walking about*—tell you the memory took the edge off my Christmas appetite."

"Well, all this sounds a damned good idea! Simple, eh? Yes, but all good things are simple—you see we're outside the wood and can still see the trees."

"Anyway I suppose it can't happen—we've still got municipal-minded Chamberlain being internationally ineffective. All the men of initiative and ability are on the outside of the Government."

"Who are they—who would you put in?"

"We-ell—Churchill for a start as Minister of Supplies—to the devil with all party pro's and con's—then Eden, Duff-Cooper, Cranborne, Herbert Morrison, Lloyd George—all in their suitable spheres."

"But in the meantime time is ticking on—on—nearer to Armageddon. The panics on—what can we do?"

"I'm going to be my own A.R.P., make your plans to do what you can to save your own—you can't rely on the Government doing anything for you. They'll just be starting to paper the room as the house collapses."

"Dammit the uncertainty and one's helplessness is horrible. I'd welcome a dictator—and I believe most people would—as an

alternative to this muddled weakness. He could get away with it so long as there were no concentration camps or salutes. The Englishman will gladly obey any order so long as he reserves the right to grumble at it. Freedom of speech is the only freedom we'll ask so long as we can feel a worthwhile nation again."

Yes, that's how we talked. *Why can't some of this happen before it's too late?* MARION YOUNG

THE ART THAT CONCEALS

SIR,—Mr. Agar's letter on the British Press omits one piece of impudence on the part of those responsible, this time for distributing the papers.

The Daily Worker, which qualifies for certain at least of Mr. Agar's definitions of a free press, is banned by the Wholesalers' Associations. These associations have chosen, for nine years, to neglect their duty of providing facilities to a free people to buy, not any particular issue, but the entire sequence of a daily publication. H. PARSONS

Daily Worker,
Nelson Place, Cayton Street, London, E.C.1.

THE CLASS WAR

SIR,—It is exceedingly difficult to understand your paper, the paragraph about Lord Stanhope, for instance, on p. 115 contradicts itself, even if your facts were not all inaccurate as usual as well.

The mention of myself in the London Diary is much the same. You state with your usual inaccuracy that "our rulers," an honour I cannot claim, are fighting a "class war." If you really believe it is people like me who start class wars, not Messrs. Wal Hannington and Co., the enclosed expression of their views should undeceive you.

My own speech at Worthing pointed out the only way to start a class war in England was to refuse to help your country by taking in refugees' children on the grounds that they might be dirty or verminous; but that the N.U.W.M. haven't a hope.

Shillinglee Park, MONICA WINTERTON
Chiddingfold.

[We commented last week on Lady Winterton's remark that she was sorry that the British members of the International Brigade "did not get themselves shot in Spain." We print her reply, grammar, punctuation and all, exactly as it has reached us.

We take the opportunity of expressing regret for having written of Lord Stanhope as if he were still President of the Board of Education. No injustice, however, was done for he was President when the events on which we commented took place.—ED. *N.S.&N.*]

GUGGENHEIM JEUNE

SIR,—Will you be so good as to correct a mis-statement relating to myself and my colleague in your last issue, under the heading "G. W. Pailthorpe and R. Mednikoff at Guggenheim Jeune"? The paintings and drawings were not done as "an analyst and a patient during the process of psycho-analysis." They were the result of a psychological research conducted upon my colleague and myself or, in other words, we were our own "rabbits." I am afraid the Foreword to the catalogue of our exhibition escaped the notice of your art critic. No mention is made of psycho-analysis, but a brief mention is made of "a research along psychological lines" and its relation to Surrealist art.

154 Harley Street, G. W. PAILTHORPE
London, W.1.

YOUTH PILGRIMAGE

SIR,—On February 18th and 19th there will be a Youth Pilgrimage to London of young men and women of military age. The Pilgrimage is the result of conferences held throughout the country to discuss foreign policy, defence and national service and pilgrims are coming from all the important centres and from as distant points as Aberdeen and Lands End.

The young people of this country are aware of their responsibilities, they are ready and willing to give service for their country, but they cannot serve to re-inforce a policy in which they do not believe. They believe that democracy can answer the challenge of Fascism, but only by an extension of democratic rights; we cannot save our liberties by sacrificing them. They call for a foreign policy that will make Britain stand once more for peace and freedom in the world, and for a programme of home defence that will protect the people. Only under these conditions will the call for national service to defend our liberties have any meaning.

The Pilgrimage has aroused the enthusiasm of young people throughout the country and has the backing of the united youth movement. Between two and three thousand pilgrims will come to London on February 18th and on the following day there will be a national rally in Trafalgar Square and a mass meeting and pageant of youth at the Empress Hall. We invite practical support for the Pilgrimage in the form of offers of hospitality for the night of February 18th when we have to find room for hundreds of young people in London. Tickets for the Empress Hall meeting can be obtained at 2*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* MARY ATHERTON,
Secretary,
15 Grosvenor Crescent, National Youth Campaign.
London, S.W.1.

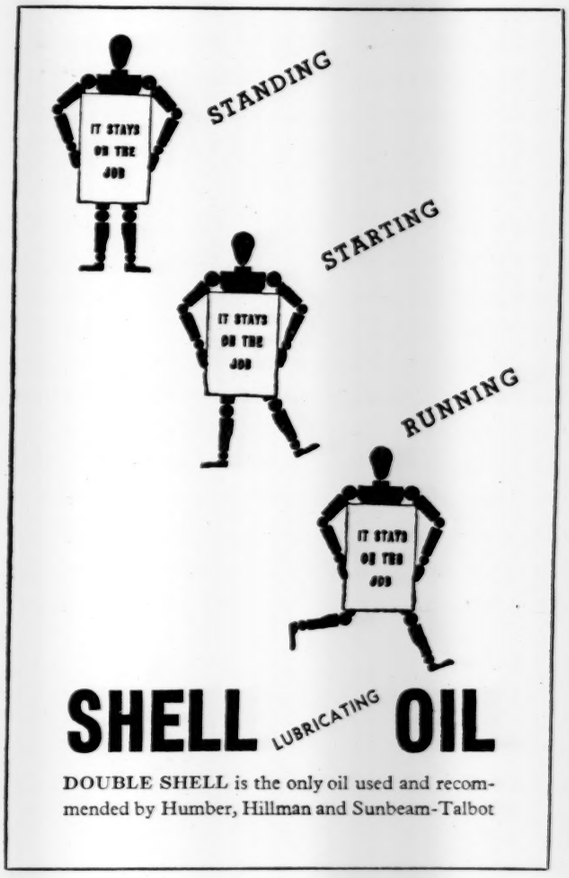
HORSES IN ACTION

SIR,—Your reviewer speaks of ". . . the ponderous fringed feet of Percherons. . . ."

In the interests of accuracy, may I point out that the advantage of Percheron horses is that their feet (or rather fetlocks) are clean, and *not* fringed? Their feet are comparatively small. That is why some people prefer Percherons to Shires, whose feet are both fringed and ponderous. C. SISLEY

52 St. George's Square, S.W.1.

We are glad to acknowledge the following further sums received for Spanish Relief: E. Barbara Wenham Smith (£6); I. W. G. Cameron (£5); M. Florence Funston, H. M. S. and A. M. H., Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Macgregor (£5); "Sunday, Monday, Tuesday" (£3); M. Burrows (£2 2*s.* 6*d.*); Anon., N. M. Drage, E. D. Hone (£2); Walter Bell (£1 10*s.*); K. T. H., J. H. Martin, O. D. Mooney, R. S. Nixon, F.G.S. (£1); I. S. H. (15*s.*); "A Studio," H. A. and L. W., M. C., E. B. S. (10*s*); S. Singh (6*s.*); M. E. Morris, F. and M. Pritt (5*s.*); M. P. M. (4*s.* 6*d.*); D. A. P. (3*s.*); P. and R. L. C. (2*s.* 6*d.*); Anon. (2*s.*); J. R. Mennie ($10).


STANDING
STARTING
RUNNING
IT STAYS ON THE JOB
SHELL LUBRICATING OIL
DOUBLE SHELL is the only oil used and recommended by Humber, Hillman and Sunbeam-Talbot

W. B. YEATS

IRELAND is a land of poets—but not of great ones. William Butler Yeats was, however, a great poet, in my opinion the greatest of all Irish poets, and he was unique among the poets not only of his country, but of the world. Posterity may recognise, I think, what has escaped his contemporaries: his enormous influence upon practical affairs. I believe it is hardly too much to say that he was unconsciously responsible for very much in modern Ireland. Yeats's early poetry was founded on his view of a mythical golden age of Celtic learning. His genius transfigured the legend so that it became not a dry matter for historians and archaeologists, but an acceptable faith for a whole generation. The belief that at one time Ireland had been the most civilised country in Europe, producing an art, literature and culture which could be compared without fear to that of ancient Greece, was at the back of the popular revival of interest in Irish legend and the Irish language which found expression in the Gaelic League. And it was the dominating influence of the aesthetically-inspired Gaelic League which fostered the dreary economic faith of Sinn Fein. Yeats did not originate a belief in the golden age of Ireland, which had always existed, and he was much influenced by the writings of Standish O'Grady. But Yeats "put poetry upon" the myth without which it could never have stirred men to action. A mass of Irishmen awoke from lives spent in judging the merits of horseflesh to a poet's view of the past. They became familiar with the old legends of the sons of Usnach and of Cuchullain from seeing Yeats's plays and reading the versions of the old sagas made under his influence by Lady Gregory in a language specially invented for the purpose. The influence of Yeats's play *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, with its famous last line: "Did you see an old woman going down the path?" "I did not, but I saw a young girl and she had the walk of a queen," upon a whole generation of Irishmen was enormous. Yeats breathed great poetry into Ireland, and, inspired by his imprecise vision, hundreds of literal-minded men began to spell their names in antique ways, to boycott all goods not made in Ireland, and finally to plunge their country into the horrors of rebellion and civil war. No doubt hundreds of Irishmen will passionately and sincerely deny Yeats's influence in this: but a denial implies that the soldiers of the I.R.A. found more inspiration in the memories of a hideous and senseless vendetta than in the vision of the greatest poet of their country. Thus it turned out that what Yeats had christened Celtic Twilight was the grey hour before a bloody and stormy sunrise. I do not suggest that the poet's part was more than to illuminate the past with glamour and to fill men's heads with dreams. But without Yeats I doubt if Douglas Hyde and Kuno Meyer would have made much headway. As readers of Moore's *Hail and Farewell* will remember, the Abbey Theatre was Yeats's work: and the theatre is responsible for the finest art which modern Ireland has given us. If he had not met Yeats, Synge would not have written plays about Ireland: if it had not been for the Abbey Theatre, O'Casey might never have written at all. Thus Yeats's influence upon his countrymen was immense and no other poet in modern times can compare with him, with the possible exception of D'Annunzio. But Yeats's spirit was the opposite of the filibustering Italian. Yeats, perhaps alone, realised how great an influence he had had:

All that I have said and done,
Now that I am old and ill,
Turns into a question till
I lie awake night after night
And never get the answers right.
Did that play of mine send out
Certain men the English shot?
Did words of mine put too great strain
On that woman's reeling brain?
Could my spoken words have checked
That whereby a house lay wrecked?
And all seems evil until I
Sleepless would lie down and die.

The poetry which had this immense but secret influence on the destiny of Ireland is well named Celtic Twilight. For though the atmosphere of poetry lies as heavy on it as the scent of flowering May on a June evening, the poems themselves are imprecise, and have none of the solidity of great poetry. Everything is unreal or if real cannot be precisely focused: here there are cat-headed men, there a blind harper; there flowers strewn by fairies. Even the ash-grey birds that have flown into the west, call to one another with human but unintelligible voices. Yeats's mind was full of poetry; beautiful things kept forming in it and succeeding each other like faces seen in a delirium. But his great poetry was to be written when all these shapes were washed away by time, and twilight had been followed by cold morning. He described his development accurately in a poem published last month:

Yet when all is said
It was a dream itself enchanted me.
Character isolated by a deed
To engross the present and dominate memory,
Players and painted stage took all my love
And not those things that they were emblems of.

Owing to this late flowering, Yeats's greatness as a poet is only recognised by a few; the later poems being obscured by the earlier. The poet of the nineties grew until in his latest short poems he is hardly recognisable. Yeats is unique among poets in that his greatest work was written in his old age. I do not know that this is true of any other poet, though the work of many painters has steadily improved in old age. Some of the best of Yeats's poems are still uncollected and were published only last year in the *London Mercury*. The change first came with the War and Easter Week. His feelings at that time are expressed in three or four poems:

I have met them at close of day
Coming with vivid faces
From counter or desk among grey
Eighteenth century houses.
I have passed with a nod of the head
Or polite meaningless words,
And thought before I had done
Of a mocking tale or a gibe
To please a companion
Around the fire at the club,
Being certain that they and I
But lived where motley is worn;
All changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

The change that came into his poetry then grew stronger with the sense of age and the despair which came in the wake of the terrible beauty born of violence. Dreams and apparitions had been his ladder. The transformation of the world he had known in Ireland, and the thought of death, broke it:

Now that my ladder is gone
I must lie down where all the ladders start
In the foul rag and bone shop of the heart.

He learned to know himself, to make the rag and bone shop the subject of his poetry. The later poems are full of the bitter regret which fills so many old men, and has been expressed by so few, when to look on the loveliness of youth is torture as well as delight. There is a sensuality entirely absent from his early work. It seemed that his perception of the outside world and his intellect increased with age and that the prayer expressed in a recent poem was answered:

Grant me an old man's frenzy
Myself I must remake
Till I am Timon and Lear
Or that William Blake
Who beat upon the wall
Till Truth obeyed his call.

Yeats's great poems are but a very small portion of his whole work. *Leda and the Swan*, those he included in the *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, and those in the *London Mercury* and *The Leaders of the Crowd* are I think outstanding. It is to be hoped that there are others unpublished. It is because Yeats had remade himself, that his death is the greatest loss English literature could suffer.

DAVID GARNETT

THE CHARACTER OF MELBOURNE

The Young Melbourne and the Story of His Marriage with Lady Caroline Lamb. By DAVID CECIL. *Constable.* 10s.

Nothing perhaps illustrates better the power of the eighteenth-century aristocracy than the mass of legend and tradition it left behind it. A society that wishes to make itself interesting to its successors must create some unity of taste and culture without depressing or standardising individual quality. In his study of democracy in America De Tocqueville drew a contrast between the taste that is formed in a leisured society and that which is improvised in a society without leisure. The Whig nobles had a background of leisure, tradition and what David Cecil calls "effortless knowledge of the world," and they had besides, as he puts it, vitality and sense of style. Politics and manners have never been so closely united or made into so finished an art of social life. Sir George Trevelyan made his reputation by giving a brilliant picture of that society, written round the early life of a statesman, in the middle of the eighteenth century. David Cecil has now given a brilliant description of that society, also written round the early life of a statesman, after it had passed through two tremendous wars. Trevelyan, as a keen rising House of Commons man, was more interested in politics than manners; Cecil is more interested in manners than in politics. But one thing is clear about that society. You cannot describe its politics without describing its manners or its manners without describing its politics. The letters of the fascinating Lady Bessborough are equally important as an intimate picture of social life and as an intimate and often a remarkably illuminating picture of high politics.

Lord David Cecil is a writer with a singularly delicate and natural grace and an insight into the subtleties of character. His theme is therefore well suited to his talents. He has something new to say even about such well-worn topics as the adventures of Lady Caroline Lamb and the perversities of Byron. But his main subject is the character of Melbourne. Melbourne is a puzzling figure. Morley notes in his diary a remark made about him by Gladstone. "Wished we knew more of Melbourne. He was in many ways a very fine fellow. In two of the most important of all the relations of a prime minister, he was perfect; I mean first, his relations to the Queen, second to his colleagues." David Cecil shows clearly why Melbourne was so much liked in his own circle. He gives a delightful picture of his easy-going and dilettante nature; quite free from any of the petty vices; a man naturally generous and sincere. As he was also witty and pointed in his remarks on men and things, well-read and interested and curious about the world, his society was very likeable. In his relations to Lady Caroline Lamb and her lovers, he was, as David Cecil shows, a tender and large-hearted man. Yet this same urbane and indulgent man was in some respects a very cruel man. He was to blame more than anybody else for the heartless treatment of the starving labourers of the South of England after the riots of 1830, and as Home Secretary he tried hard to increase the savage brutalities of the transportation system when it was at its worst. He and Edward Stanley, afterwards Lord Derby, then Colonial Secretary, wanted to introduce new punishments. Two Colonial Governors made strong protests, arguing that they were not only brutal but illegal. When Peel took office in 1835, Aberdeen, who succeeded Stanley at the Colonial Office, sent a despatch to Arthur, Governor of Van Diemen's Land, whose "just and impressive remarks," as Aberdeen described them, had had no effect on Stanley and Melbourne, saying that the Law Officers of the Crown held the same view as Arthur that the new penalties were illegal. Anybody who has read the Reports of the Commissions on secondary punishments or Marcus Clarke's novel *For the term of his natural life* will be astonished to find that any British statesman could have believed that the transportation system erred on the side of indulgence.

How did it happen that Melbourne, who was drawn into politics by the attraction of Fox, whose sensibility, says Cecil, was tremblingly keen, wanted something that was too brutal either for men trained in the hard unsentimental school of a convict settlement or for his Conservative successors? The answer is to be found by finding where he differed from Fox. Fox, though he lived in a small society, was not shut up in it. He did not study economic problems or work at any serious social subject, but he had an instinctive feeling for man's self respect which gave imagination to his politics. Most of his contemporaries regarded the growing proletariat with contempt and fear. Fox was so free from this spirit that he defended liberty even when the French Revolution by turning, as it seemed, into mere violence appeared to justify the worst fears of the most convinced Tories. Two instances illustrate his spirit. He defended the proposal for a minimum wage in agriculture for the very reason that good Tory philanthropists were against it. He said that the alternative, the dependence of free men on the charity of the rich, was worse than an experiment in compulsion, little as he liked compulsion of any kind. Men like Wilberforce thought that the more the poor learnt that they depended on the rich, the better. Again he fought the Treason and Sedition Bills as passionately as if they were directed not against the poor but against property. He had such power over a few friends that he inspired them with his own spirit. Thus Holland made a speech against the Combination Laws, which was afterwards reprinted by the Radicals; which is much as if a rich, highly educated peer had made a speech on behalf of the General Strike that was afterwards reprinted by the T.U.C. Fox and his friends, a small exclusive set, had too large a sympathy with liberty to let the scare of revolution turn them against it. We have only to look at the effect of the post-war Communist scare to realise what an immense achievement this was.

Melbourne was never warmed by this fire. As Cecil says, his true leader was Canning, who had none of it, and not Fox. "He was terrified of revolution. And in private life he avoided the disagreeable as much as he could. Even in books he refused to read anything that dealt with the grim or the sordid. Crabbe, he said, degraded everything he touched; and in later years he put aside *Oliver Twist* after one glance." (Fox on his death-bed gave Crabbe advice and encouragement.) Melbourne therefore capitulated to the scare of revolution; he supported the coercion of Sidmouth and Castlereagh. The later Fox, as we can see from Lady Bessborough's letters, was bored by society. He liked St. Anne's Hill with Homer and Euripides, because he was more interested in human kind than in Whig gossip and Whig wit. Melbourne moved in his little world with grace, generosity, humour, and all the virtues that make a man liked and trusted by his friends. But outside that little world there was a vast and dangerous

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unknown. The only thing to do with it was to keep it down by repression and to trust, with the enlightened economists, to "vice and misery" to check its growth.

Melbourne's great success illustrates his character as well as his failures. For he had one immense success as Prime Minister. From 1835 to 1840 Ireland was well governed. Until Sir Robert Hamilton produced his memorandum on Home Rule in the autumn of 1885 for the enlightenment of Carnarvon (and indirectly of Spencer) no official who served in Dublin Castle showed half the independence and courage that Thomas Drummond brought to the government of Ireland during those five years. They stand out in the dismal record of English failure. Why did Melbourne show himself in that case a wise reformer? Cynics reply that he depended on O'Connell in the House of Commons and the "Lichfield compact" as it was called was invoked as a sinister memory by diehard Tories for the rest of the century. The *Times* quoted it as a warning to Gladstone. But why was Melbourne ready to work with O'Connell? The answer is that on all English social questions Melbourne was living in the atmosphere of one century among the problems of another. He was terrified of the Trade Unions and wanted to go back to something like the Combination Laws. But Ireland was still in the atmosphere of the eighteenth century. Melbourne, though he had not enough of Fox's temper to disapprove of coercion, had enough of that temper to hate the ascendancy spirit in Ireland. Fox had fought side by side with Grattan against the narrow ungenerous rule of the garrison, and Melbourne fought the same battle with O'Connell as his ally. There he showed himself not only perfect in his relations to the Queen and his relations to his colleagues, but perfect also in his relations to a great and constructive reforming civil servant and the problems that reformer tried to solve.

J. L. HAMMOND

NEW NOVELS

The Hairy Man. By MAX CATTO. *Richards Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Welded Lives. By GEORGE INGRAM. *Duckworth.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The General's Lady. By ESTHER FORBES. *Chatto and Windus.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Judith Quinn. By CONAL O'RIORDAN. *Arrowsmith.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Considering the immense influence the Bible has exerted on literary style and imagery, remarkably few novelists have taken their themes directly from Biblical sources. This is the more surprising since many of the Books are almost straight biography written with a sense of character and an eye for realism quite foreign to classical mythology or the sacred writings of the Far East; while even the Old Testament offers a variety of type and behaviour unequalled in Homer or the Sagas. It is tempting, indeed, to attribute the supremacy of European fiction to the existence of this vast, venerated collection of magnificent short stories in which even the miracles use natural phenomena—the best Joshua can do is to stop the sun so that the Israelites have more time to win by their own efforts—and even the prophets are subject to everyday psychology. One need only compare the stories of Moses and David with the grotesque fantasies of the Vedas or the Glass Palace Chronicle to understand why the novel has stayed west of Suez. Perhaps, though, its very excellence has preserved the Bible from borrowers, and made critics as intolerant of imitation as heretics used to be of criticism. In any event, the trespasser on this the last of literature's Royal Enclosures must tread as warily as Agag and presume as diffidently as Lot.

The Hairy Man is the prophet Elijah, but the story is chiefly concerned with Ahab, who did evil in the sight of the Lord more than all that were before him, and his Queen Jezebel, that remarkable woman who has outdone St. Theresa and Queen Elizabeth by becoming a noun in her own right. Elijah is there too, of course, a great, kindly giant of a man with a quick temper and an unexpected prophetic gift that seldom, however, leads him to mystic introspection; but the central figures are the two wicked monarchs, and the book ends when the certain man draws his bow at a venture and Jehu drives furiously to avenge Israel on the aged Jezebel. At first reading *The Hairy Man* struck me as a very bad book. Mr. Catto's style is so vernacular as to be often vulgar, and he has no hesitation in making Ahab a henpecked husband and Jezebel a go-getting gold-digger of the most post-war transatlantic vintage. He is capable, too, of such stylistic lapses as:

> Rumours and fictions grew faster than the sinking King of Israel's breath ebbed. Three nations hung upon those parting pants,

and indulges in the particularly infuriating form of anachronism that confuses historical periods—thus he makes the Israelites fight with Macedonian tactics and uses "Byzantian" as a descriptive adjective before Byzantium was founded. Yet somehow, in spite of everything, this is an unusual and impressive novel. For all its clumsiness the writing is rapid and effective, and the purple passages—Jezebel driving down through the thunderstorm after Elijah has called fire from Heaven; Ahab's death in battle—stir the imagination more than the vulgarisms offend the sensibilities. And though Mr. Catto has no sense of history and little feeling for subtleties of character, he has a keen eye for externals and can paint the glare of a Palestinian summer or the galleys crawling like beetles on a turquoise sea with the flat, vivid expressionism of a good poster. *The Hairy Man* has the vices and virtues of a spectacular film. It is slick, crude and superficial and marred by gross errors of taste; but it is also oddly convincing and has action sequences as moving as the best moments of Griffiths or Cecil B. de Mille. It depends, of course, on whether you prefer the Academy or the Empire; personally, I shall remember parts of Mr. Catto's book long after the Psychological Novel of the Month has sunk back into the general Unconscious.

Welded Lives is a hostile documentary of Borstal cast in the form of a novel. Mr. Ingram writes, apparently, from personal experience, and though he declares that the characters, including the unjustly convicted hero, are wholly fictitious, he also assures us that every incident is founded on fact. The significant fact about Borstal Institutions is that they are run on public-school lines for boys mostly of University age, and so tend to be retrogressive rather than educational. There are houses, competitive games and a rudimentary monitorial system, with the warders playing the part of junior masters but carrying truncheons instead of canes. In many ways Borstal, without beating, fagging or the *esprit d'école* that eccentric individualists find worse than either, is a good deal milder than many public schools: some writers could tell Mr. Ingram that the scrubbing in icy baths and flicking with wet towels which he quotes as major atrocities are sometimes far outdone under conditions of free inhibition. And the other horrors of his indictment—the "shameful practices" and homosexuality—seem a good deal less prevalent at Borstal than in many more respected institutions. The real case against Borstal—a system which works very differently in different places—is that in the wrong hands it may encourage crime faster than it inculcates good citizenship. Theoretically, only first offenders are sent to the Institutions, but since a good many of these are in their twenties they are often, or for pride's sake pretend to be, comparatively hardened offenders, and tend to be hero-worshipped as such by the younger boys. Unlike a prison, Borstal is supposed to be educational rather than punitive, and does seem to provide good physical and technical training. Unfortunately, it is popularly regarded as a prison pure and simple, and the inmate is as likely to do what is expected of him and go into crime as an Old Etonian is to enter the Diplomatic Service. But the authorities are so unaware of what Borstal looks like to its graduates that at least one of the Institutions displays an elaborate tablet bearing, graved in imperishable gold, the names of former students who fell in the Great War. As a novel *Welded Lives* is mediocre, particularly as its hero is such a tough, adaptable fellow that his experiences, whether hardships or emotional ecstasies, have the least possible effect on him; one would far rather have had the biography of a more sensitive prisoner. But, whatever its faults as literature, Mr. Ingram's book is an informative and fairly unbiased essay on a very important subject, and probably gives a better idea of what Borstal is really like than can any number of official Reports.

At last, in spite of the censorship still imposed by school history books, we are coming to know quite a lot about the American War of Independence. There were bluff, tough, humorous American Generals called Arn or Andy, red-faced, be-laced British Generals seen only in the distance, dignified, pathetic old Tories (Lionel Barrymore), dashing young Rebels (Gary Cooper), and socialite, rather yellowish British Lieutenants, while a buck-skinned country cousin of Uncle Sam spat, sniped and philosophised in every regiment (unfortunately for George III, John Bull didn't arrive till the next century). All these old friends form the background of Miss Forbes's novel, but *The General's Lady* is a good deal more than another historical epic. Really, it is a fairy story in eighteenth century dress. The beautiful Morganna sitting alone in her lovely house awaiting her oafish husband's return from the war, the fugitive British officer who wins her hospitality and heart, her young protégée Dilly Lavender

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(significantly romantic name), and her dark, subtle stepson who finally brings her to ruin are all presented realistically enough, yet they also have the strangeness of figures seen through glass or across the ocean of two centuries. Even the General's death and Morganna's trial for murder are, for all the well-sustained tension, somehow vague and unreal. Miss Forbes's characters are a little brighter than life, just as her historical background is a little more coloured than reality. She has, so to speak, cleared the stage of those minor indecisions and irrelevancies that distinguish life from fable, and lets the tragedy play itself out undisturbed by the pointless side issues that distract mind and body more effectively, because more continuously, than major joys or disasters. *The General's Lady* is written with grace and style, and shows an uncommon but unobtrusive feeling for period. It is life seen through the wrong end of a telescope; distant, perhaps, but bright and infinitely more attractive, for a time, than the dusty truth of ordinary observation or the exaggerated horrors apparent through the other end of the glass.

Judith Quinn is the latest number of Mr. O'Riordan's chronicles of late Victorian Anglo-Irish life. Mr. O'Riordan writes well, and the story of Judith's marriage to a loutish young barrister serves as the framework for a pleasantly nostalgic picture of the Pale in the last days before it turned green. The aristocratic Dublin of *Judith Quinn* is, alas, as dead as the red light quarter of *Ulysses*, and its flounces and conventions seem as unreal as Polynesian ritual. It is to Mr. O'Riordan's credit that he recreates naturally a very unnatural period, and makes his characters at once interesting, Irish and wholly credible.

JOHN MAIR

THE NEW MACHIAVELLI

The School for Dictators. By IGNAZIO SILONE. *Cape.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

"Democracy," remarks Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, "is at best a means to an end which one uses to cripple one's opponent and leave the road clear for one's actions." Or as Goebbels put it after the 1928 elections: "We entered the Reichstag to provide ourselves with arms in Democracy's own arsenal. We become Reichstag deputies in order to lay the Weimar mentality low with its own staff and props. If Democracy is stupid enough to give us free passes and assistance in doing it this evil service, that is its own affair." And in 1935: "We, National-Socialists, have never stated we were democrats. On the contrary, we publicly stated that we only used democratic means to win power and that after the seizure of power we would ruthlessly deny our opponents all the facilities that were granted us when we were in opposition."

If Fascism makes progress in the world, it is not from lack of candour. The astonishing thing, as Thomas the Cynic remarks in Signor Silone's remarkable dialogue, is the infinite credulity of the democrats, who, in spite of such clear statements, continue to meet Fascism on the same plane as other political parties. But this is only part of the reason for Fascist success. Fascism could not succeed if those who call themselves democrats really believed in themselves and their own philosophy. They know it to be the better philosophy and they know that Socialism is the only cure for the economic conflict which is breaking up society. But they only know it intellectually. Their revolution is in the past and they lack the will to extend it to to-day's needs. It is only when they have lost all their opportunities that Fascism steps in. As Thomas the Cynic puts it:

> The secret of the Fascist party's success is the position it occupies in society in a state of crisis, between a governing class powerless to meet the country's new needs and an opposition incapable of replacing it. For the Fascist party to be able to seize fortune by the forelock and step into the vacant place, it must be led by a leader who is an unbridled demagogue, passionate for success.

The origins, history and methods of Fascism have been explored by a score of able writers. Not one of them, I think, has mastered his subject or presented it as brilliantly as Signor Silone. He has great advantages. As those who have read *Fontamara* and *Bread and Wine* know, he writes with admirable economy and wit. Born in 1900, he joined in 1917 a Peasant League and then became Secretary to the Socialist Youth of Rome. Later, as editor of the *Avanguardia* and of *Il Lavoratore* he gained practical experience of Fascism. His paper was three times raided by the Fascists, who were accompanied by the police, and the office and printing works of the paper were completely wrecked. He was expelled from Italy, but returned as a Communist to work illegally from 1925 to 1928. He has been in prison in Italy and also in Spain under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. He left the Communist Party in 1930 and settled down to write in Switzerland. Thus, he has the first-hand knowledge and courage of a revolutionary worker; he has also a scholar's mastery of political theory, classical and modern. In the course of this dialogue he dissects Fascism as an historical movement and shows with a wide range of quotation from Aristotle and Machiavelli to Marx and Sorel how old the ideas of Fascism are and how entirely its theory is an afterthought following upon its practice.

The dialogue form affords him abundant opportunity for a gay and caustic wit. Mr. W. is an American, who hopes to lead a Fascist movement in the United States. He has been brought to Europe by Professor Pickup, a pompous "neo-sociologist," who hopes to play the Aristotle to Mr. W.'s Alexander. But Mr. W., a practical politician, is bored by Professor Pickup's view that programmes and ideas are important and that he may learn to conquer America by an elaborate dissection of dictatorship in Europe. Thomas the Cynic joins in the dialogue and proceeds to explain to Mr. W. that what he has to learn from Hitler and Mussolini is a lesson of tactics and not of theory. Fascism is a movement financed by those who fear Socialism, and headed by men of ruthless energy with the sole purpose of obtaining power. We are given examples of places in which Fascism has failed; it has failed in countries where people believe in their Democracy because it is a going concern and where the "would-be" dictator has put forward a definite programme and made the mistake of believing in what he says. Thomas has an admirable passage on this question of sincerity: "There is no doubt whatever," he says, "that Fascist leaders sincerely desire power." Inconsistencies, lies and nonsense are jumbled together in their speeches, but they are all sincere for they all have the object of producing fear in their opponents and unquestioning loyalty in various groups of their possible adherents. No Fascist leader is likely to succeed, Thomas explains, if he desires anything but power. For that reason, the most precious gift with which merciful Providence can endow a future dictator is a mind divided in water-tight compartments. His personality

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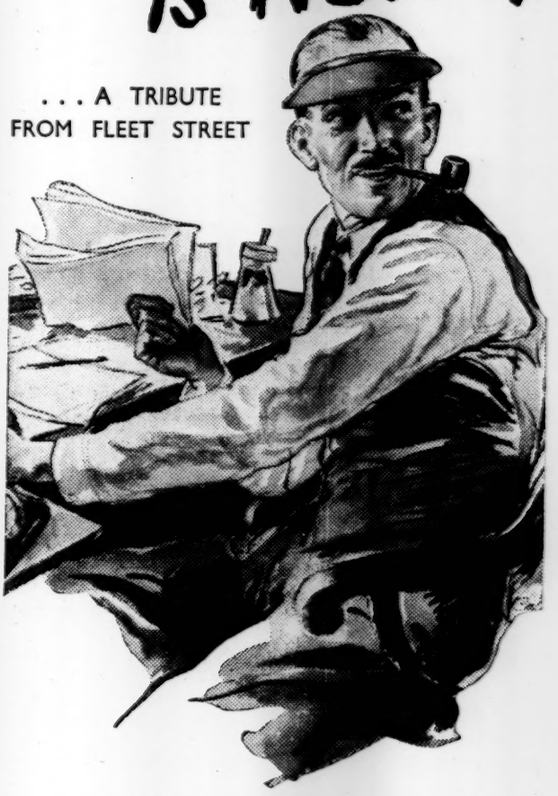

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It is difficult to stop quoting from this book, because it supplies in a very readable form the answer to most of the questions that people ask one about Fascism. The account of the methods and reasons for Hitler's success in Germany and for Mussolini's in Italy could scarcely be better done. Here too is an admirably selected body of quotations from Nazi and Fascist literature—a complete armoury for those who still hope to save the British from the mistakes of Continental Social Democrats. Here too is an analysis of the mythology of Fascism and a consideration of the mistakes of Russia and the prospects of Fascism and Democracy in the United States. And there is not a dull page in the book.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

A STRANGE RECORD

A Journey Round My Skull. By FRIGYES KARINTHY. Translated by VERNON DUCKWORTH BARKER. *Faber and Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Pirandello once wrote a brilliant little play called *The Man with the Flower in his Mouth*. (Perhaps the Westminster Theatre, having successfully revived Strindberg, will consider it for their next triple bill?). The title predisposes to gaiety, and the curtain goes up on two men chatting outside a café. As often happens in conversation between strangers, one wishes to talk while the other settles down to listen; the bottle must fill the glass. In this case the talker sets out to charm and to impress his singularity on his companion; he has been shopping, and describes in fascinating detail, as though he were cataloguing a Spring morning, the way in which the shop assistant has spoken to him and flourished his hands, how the parcel has been wrapped up, the change snatched from the overhead railway, and so on. This delight in small acts daintily performed has become the passion of his life, and as he goes on talking, with nervous insistence, we begin to guess his secret. He is ill, of course; it all comes out—the doctor has given him three months, the flower in his mouth is a cancer. And the scene ends when he gathers up his parcels and goes to rejoin his wife, who has been watching from the corner of the street.

Frigyes Karinthy reminds one of Pirandello in a number of ways. Indeed, if Pirandello had found himself in the situation of the character of his play, this is just the sort of book, absorbed and ironically detached, we should expect him to have written. He could not have written it better. *A Journey Round my Skull* is the autobiography of nine months of illness (tumour on the brain) which everyone expected to end fatally. The first hint that anything was wrong occurred one evening when the author, a well-known Hungarian writer, was sitting in a café studying a crossword. It was his habit to do this crossword every evening, and he was always baffled by one or two clues referring to "well-known proverbs" he had never heard of.

> At that very moment the trains started. Punctually to the minute, at ten past seven, I heard the first one.
>
> I looked up in surprise to see what was happening. There was a distinct rumbling noise, followed by a slow increasing reverberation, as when the wheels of an engine begin their unhurried movement, then work up a louder and louder roar as the train glides past us, only to fade into silence, like the song of the Volga boatmen straining at their craft. I decided that it might have been a lorry and returned to the mysterious proverb.
>
> Only a minute had gone by when the next train started.

After that, the trains returned every evening; they became a habit and at times even amused him. The next symptom was more alarming: a fainting fit which he took at first for a stroke. He went to a doctor who diagnosed nicotine poisoning. Though his own feeling was of something far more serious, and he suspected a tumour on the brain long before any of the specialists would pronounce, he found himself instinctively acting and thinking as though such an illness were *impossible*. When he was under daily observation at the hospital he was even able by strength of will to pass some of the tests as though he were normal; one test, though, he had forgotten to guard against, and raising his arms, with eyes closed, he lifted one higher than the other, and so, in his own words, "came a cropper." The specialist then knew without possibility of error what Karinthy had known for weeks and struggled against. Once the nature of his malady was recognised, he accepted it completely, discussing it, walking round it, bouncing it eagerly here and there on the springboard of theory. His knowledge of medicine (he had been trained to be a doctor) as well as his professional curiosity as a writer made him the perfect reporter of such an experience. The various phases and components of his illness—rapid physical deterioration, enhanced dreaming, freedom from responsibility—are conveyed with extraordinary acuteness. There is, too, a lightness, a transparency in his descriptions (such as one gets sometimes in the writings of opium-addicts) which may be due to the advances of the disease but more probably to his own bounding egotism. It would be impossible to have a better imaginative record of a disease, from the first discovery of the tumour to its removal during an operation of four hours, three of which Karinthy experienced without losing consciousness; but at the same time we are aware on every page of the author himself, interested, ironically assertive, as capable of knowing how he appears to others as of recording his own musings. Obviously he is the type of writer who is also an actor; he believes in the Pirandellian theatrical philosophy of human life. In one charmingly extravagant passage he refers to "the apple-tree merely playing the part of an apple-tree, while the stars have their role in the great *ensemble* of heaven."

We may read *A Journey Round My Skull* in order to discover what it is like to suffer from a tumour on the brain—and on that point M. Karinthy satisfies our curiosity. Those indeed who are horrified at the thought—he was threatened by blindness, paralysis and idiocy, if not death—will no doubt be horrified by parts of the

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DUCHESS. The Corn is Green. W., S., 2.30
DUKE OF YORKS. Nora. Tues., Thur.
LYRIC. The Flashing Stream. Wed. & Thurs.
MERCURY. The Playboy. Fri., Sat.
PALACE. Under Your Hat. Wed., Sat.
QUEEN'S. Dear Octopus. Wed. & Sat.
ST. JAMES. Geneva. Wed. & Sat
S. MARTIN'S. When We are Married. Tu..Fr.
SAVILLE. Worth a Million Wed. & Sat.
STRAND. Little Ladyship. Sat., Feb 11
VAUDEVILLE. Goodness, How Sad! Tu., F.
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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Rates and all information on page 185

book. It is, however, a triumph of writing, of stoical insight, and like Baudelaire's *Une Charogne*, leaves us finally curious about its author. Who is Frigyes Karinthy? He has an unnerving talent. Reviewers do not often trouble to read those pages of information which the publisher sends out with his books; but I referred to Messrs. Faber and Faber's notes accompanying *A Journey Round My Skull* and found them informative. Karinthy was born in Budapest in 1888. He is popular as a wit and humorous journalist, and spends most of his time in cafés. His serious work is placed high by critics. He has written plays, novels and stories and introduced nonsense writing to Hungary, "in order to break up conventionalities of language." He seems, so far as one can discover, to enjoy in Budapest the sort of reputation which Altenberg has long enjoyed in Vienna. Such talents do not always export well. But to judge from *A Journey Round My Skull*, Frigyes Karinthy may well be a writer as interesting and original, say, as Italo Svevo. There are not many humorists witty enough to remark "Humour is no joke to me" (a phrase I notice in his book). Let us hope that Mr. Vernon Duckworth Barker, a personal friend of Karinthy, who has translated admirably the present volume, will be encouraged to give us some of his other work. Meanwhile, *A Journey Round My Skull* is, what the publishers claim for it, a very remarkable book.

G. W. STONIER

DYNAMIC HISTORY

The Common People, 1746-1938. By G. D. H. COLE and RAYMOND POSTGATE. *Methuen.* 6*s.*

"Every schoolboy," declared Macaulay, with his usual assurance, "knows who imprisoned Montezuma and who strangled Atahualpa." If so, matriculation examiners have long since rendered such erudition flat and unprofitable. The Spens Committee on educational reconstruction has been declaring lately that history provides the best medium for the teaching of citizenship—a view that will disturb professional historians more than teachers. But every schoolmaster knows nowadays that it does not matter what you teach so much as how you teach it. And so we are in a muddle. Are we to acquire the principles of good citizenship from the study of diplomatic history, or from the quasi-quantitative economic history at present fashionable, or will the bowdlerised political monotonies do, as now imposed by external examiners upon the adolescents of secondary schools for the purposes of School Certificate and Matriculation? Perhaps we ought to go back to the romanticised Montezumas and Atahualpas. Or should we start exercises in the materialist conception in the fourth form? A healthy scepticism about "the lessons of history" is not inconsistent with the ardent pursuit of Clio, but it would be helpful to know what we are driving at, so that the right kind of history might be accessible for adolescent and other readers. If the general aim is to outline the background of contemporary tensions, internal and external, or if it is to make people intelligently aware of the variety and quality of their quasi-democratic inheritance, there is room for a considerable widening of the scope of the history which is taught in educational institutions. In particular, there is a quite urgent need to introduce the subject-matter of this study of *The Common People*. On the other hand, if it is desired to preserve our present social and political structure, to keep our world safe for ex-Etonians and to make certain that the oncoming generation will continue to shoulder readily the burdens of capitalist or any other imperialism, let the substance of *The Common People* be kept at arm's length.

If history—the history, that is, which people will read as distinct from the pursuit of the specialist researcher—if history can be dynamic, it is likely in our society to be that of the common people. Their demands, whether completely articulate or not, make the pace in the political worlds of to-day. It is the outstanding merit of this admirable work that it takes a wide and purposive view of our struggle towards democracy and yet retains the open-mindedness which prevents it from being sectarian. Both its authors have worked for long years in the turgid masses of its often repellent documentation and both have been far too active in the rough-and-tumble of contemporary Labour movements ever to become merely bookish. Further, their interests are complementary. Mr. Cole has the austerities, some may say, of the academic historian and Mr. Postgate the sympathies of the experienced journalist. But the surprising thing about this collaboration is the unification of theme and treatment which has been achieved. The division of labour by which Mr. Cole does the cross-section factual chapters and Mr. Postgate the narratives of events has not been too rigidly adhered to. Both authors are deeply interested in the economic and social as well as the resultant political history of industrialism, but the special competence of the one is most profitably supplemented by that of the other. Occasionally, but only occasionally, something slips out—it is odd, for instance, to have some detail about the railway speculations of the middle 'thirties of last century and a mere mention of the big mania of the 'forties. More could have been said of the consequences, for example, in the field of housing and health, of the dominant individualism of the mid-Victorian era and of the sort of "civilisation" that inevitably went with it. There is, perhaps, too little about social habit in this history of the common people—too little about what folk ate and wore and how they slept; too little (or is it nothing?) about football and the Lancashire Cricket League and holidays in Blackpool; too little about the religion (even if mainly a negative) of the common people and too much, perhaps, of the Junta—but there is a compensating readiness to quote, and to quote picturesquely, from the Labour press, which the authors of this book know better than anyone has known it since the Webbs. The simple truth is that the history of the common people of any country is quite extraordinarily difficult to manage. If the wrong Sir John Simon figures—Edwin Chadwick appears, but not the hero of the mid-century cholera wars and arch disturber of Victorian complacency—we must not grouse, for this book is so tightly packed that if a new name or fact is to get into its 670 pages, like the sea-birds on Mr. Keynes's Malthus Island, another one has to be pushed out. There is not much point, therefore, in niggling criticisms of this masterly book. *The Common People* is far and away the best available book on its subject. It leads the reader from the last Jacobite rebellion up to the present day, with all its disturbing uncertainties, so skilfully and so fairly that it stakes out a due claim to be an indispensable book.

H. L. BEALES

AFTER MUNICH

Danubian Destiny. By GRAHAM HUTTON. *Harrap.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Hutton has written an extraordinarily useful handbook to the problem of Europe after Munich, for, as he rightly insists, the destiny of the Danubians is inseparable from our own. If this book has the defects of its merits in a certain breathlessness of presentation, it is a *tour de force* to have published a piece of work which deals with the contemporary situation without allowing the extraordinary velocity of current events to overtake it by anything much more than the fall of Dr. Schacht.

Mr. Hutton is particularly to be thanked for his clear exposition of the Schacht wizardry which has hitherto enabled Germany to flout the rules of the economic game without a spectacular collapse. The uninitiated will find in *Danubian Destiny* an intelligible answer to their bewildered questions about the double currency of Germany, for example, while the initiated will welcome the clarity of the definition of the protests which have caused Hitler to replace Dr. Schacht. For the latter has certainly been pointing out to the more fanatical leaders of the Party-State that, as Mr. Hutton says, Germany "cannot meet all their (the Danubian countries') raw-material requirements, all their capital requirements, all their needs of equipment—and simultaneously turn the ever-expanding Reich into a more and more potent war-machine at home."

Mr. Hutton examines the economic effects of Germany's territorial gains during 1938; he shows that, in spite of Austria's iron, "the Third Reich's import needs of iron ore have been increased by the annexations"; the same thing, of course, applies to a number of other basic raw materials. After analysing Germany's economic relationship with the smaller countries to her south and east, he comes to the conclusion that "the new Reich can only become partially self-sufficient even on the combined export surpluses of all Eastern, Central and South-Eastern Europe; and there is no reason to suppose that countries like Rumania, Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Jugoslavia . . . will, apart from sheer military conquest, rapidly turn over their entire exports to the Reich." These considerations are immensely relevant to the all-absorbing question of whether Germany will launch a war this very Spring. If her economic problem is no nearer solution and if the Nazi leaders are aware of it, will this impel them to fight now before France and England can equip themselves more adequately, or will it cause them to regard their chances in war as not sufficiently good?

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WELWYN

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Rates and all information on page 185

Apart from the danger of war Mr. Hutton warns us that "the German authorities might attempt to corner all the supplies from these (Central and East) European countries, send them the equipment they need in exchange and—this is the crux—act as a vast entrepôt centre for all Europe beyond the Rhine and Alps." This, as he points out, would greatly intensify the problem of German underselling, the danger from which has stirred Mr. Hudson to his spirited protests.

The economic section of *Danubian Destiny* is, I think, the most valuable, but politics and strategy also receive Mr. Hutton's attention. It is now generally agreed that, far from Germany occupying her superfluous energy in an eastward drive, the West seems to be in more immediate danger of some kind of attack; Mr. Hutton seems to have become aware of this a month or so earlier than the rest of us. He emphasises to what extent Italy has become a dependency of Germany and the consequently immediate strategic importance of Switzerland and the Swiss railways. The destruction of Switzerland may be very much nearer to-day than the construction of Great Ukrainia.

In analysing the effects of the agreement at Munich Mr. Hutton touches upon the position of the Jews since that strange negotiation occurred. "The significance of Munich in this connection," he writes, "is that it gave an enormous impetus to anti-Semitism throughout Europe beyond Germany in convincing all Germany's neighbours that the harbouring or good treatment of Jews would be taken by the Nazis for unrighteousness." This sentence surely underestimates the importance of Munich, which was the prelude, not merely to an intensification of the persecution of Jews in the smaller countries, but also to the notorious pogroms within Germany itself. The Munich Agreement, that is to say, led directly to a large-scale extension of Nazi terrorism; for the vast numbers of people concerned, either as victims or persecutors, this involved suffering and atrocity than which war could scarcely be more horrible.

ELIZABETH WISKEMANN

GOTHS AND VANDALS

Church Builders of the Nineteenth Century. By BASIL F. L. CLARKE. *S.P.C.K.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This book is a study of some of the most hideous artifacts known to history—the churches built in Victorian Gothic. Whereas Sir Kenneth Clark in his *Gothic Revival* was concerned almost exclusively with the aims of the movement, Mr. Clarke has had the courage to examine its results. He has scoured the country for polychrome spires, brass eagles, ivy-decorated gas-brackets, polished granite colonnettes, alabaster reredoses, encaustic tiles, incised alphas and omegas. Often the collector attributes to objects that excite his curiosity or covetousness an aesthetic value that they do not possess, and philatelists will talk of a rare colonial stamp as if it had been designed by Goya or Rembrandt. But Mr. Clarke retains his critical sense, and while anxious to emphasise any merits he can discover, seems to know that most of the buildings he discusses belong to the teratology of architecture.

Why the visual arts in the nineteenth century so completely deteriorated remains unexplained—the spread of machinery seems in some way to have debauched the artist's eye as well as the craftsman's hand. But it is easy to understand why the ugliest of Victorian buildings are those designed in a Gothic style. If an architect, working in the Renaissance manner, observed the traditional precepts, the proportions of his building, however uninspired, would never be disgusting; but the Gothic Revival architect, unless he attempted an exact replica, had to trust for his proportions to his own sensibility. Mediaeval Gothic in its best examples is a matter of audacious engineering used to display magnificent glass-painting and sculpture. Judged by the purest architectural criterion as systems of forms in three dimensions, few if any Gothic buildings achieve the perfection of the finest Byzantine, Romanesque and Renaissance designs. But the Victorian revivalists were none of them engineers of genius, and to find a nineteenth-century parallel to Beauvais or Le Mans one must look not to churches but to the exhibition building of Paxton, the tower and viaducts of Eiffel. On the other hand, during the Victorian age sculpture and painting—except for a few eccentric individuals in France—ceased to exist. Yet the architects chose to work in just that style which most urgently demanded the collaboration of sculptors and painters. When they tried to copy the Romanesque of Lombardy or Normandy, the results were no doubt unhappy; but usually they picked on styles far more intractable. The "Late Middle Pointed" of the fourteenth century now seems to most of us to have been—even in the fourteenth century—a peculiarly infelicitous species of Gothic. But when this style was imitated by Victorian architects, under the dictation of the Camden Society and *The Ecclesiologist*, the result was some of the most depressing architecture in Europe. Then, during the 'fifties, foreign Gothic began to be fashionable. There was much talk of "constructive coloration"; and with the help of polychrome bricks, variegated marbles, and encaustic tiles, the architects plumbed new depths. All Saints, Margaret St., is one of the better known, but milder, specimens of a style that contrived to be at once garish and lugubrious: one is reminded of the pitiful eccentrics, sometimes seen padding through the London streets, dolled out in bedraggled plumes and what once were furs. The works in this manner of an architect named Bassett Keeling are particularly interesting to such connoisseurs in morbidity as Mr. John Betjeman.

But if a sophisticated taste can find something "amusing" in these singular monuments of religious enthusiasm, the restorations committed during the same period cannot be considered a joke. Pugin "had hopes of rebuilding St. Peter's, Rome, in a better style," but the Vatican showed its wonted distaste for progress. The Church of England, however, was animated with fearless enthusiasm:

> At a meeting of the Ecclesiological Society on May 18, 1847, J. M. Neale announced his willingness to see Peterborough Cathedral pulled down, "if it could have been replaced by a Middle Pointed Cathedral as good of its sort." The members of the society having expressed their opinions, Mr. Neale said that mediaeval architects only destroyed the works of their predecessors in the belief that their own were better. He himself, could he know that a better style than Middle Pointed was discovered, would destroy all Middle Pointed building.

Lord Grimthorpe rebuilt the Cathedral at St. Albans according to his own notions; in hundreds of churches pulpits, rood-screens, fonts, west galleries, old glass, brasses, sculptured monuments and wall-paintings were blithely destroyed, and windows, doors and capitals rebuilt with no feeling for material or handling. Sir Gilbert Scott improved out of recognition Wren's church, St. Michael's, Cornhill, to meet the taste of the age. In the words of *The Ecclesiologist*:

> He fuses the vaulting into something transitional between Pointed and Italian. And he inserts tracery in all the round-headed windows, and the great ugly stable-like circles of the clerestory become roses under his plastic hand.

Mr. Clarke gives illustrations of Stoke d'Abernon church before restoration, and as it is to-day; the contrast is abominable, and there is not one old church in a hundred that one can visit without finding evidence of similar vandalism. The piety of the nineteenth century did more damage to the churches of England than the neglect of the eighteenth or the Puritanism of the sixteenth and seventeenth. Nor is this Gothic vandalism yet extinct. Sir Charles Nicholson, who writes a preface to this book, has recently refurbished the interior of St. Mary's, Oxford, and done much in the process to destroy its character. The chief lesson of the Gothic Revival is that we should preserve and not demolish. For my part I would not, if it could be avoided, alter one detail even in a church by Bassett Keeling.

Mr. Clarke has made a useful and entertaining book. His judgment does not seem to me always trustworthy: he is too indulgent, for instance, to Street, and he seems oddly blind to the charm of the first Gothic Revival churches such as St. Mary's, Somers Town. Moreover he has, for no good reason that I can discover, omitted to consider Gothic Revival churches built for non-Anglican denominations. (The Irvingite church in Gordon Square is one of the best buildings of its sort.) He ends his book with a conventional doxology, saying that for most nineteenth-century church-building we should be grateful, and for much of it we should do well to thank God. But in the body of the book edification has wisely been subordinated to information and criticism.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

General Anthropology. Edited by FRANZ BOAS. *Harrap.* 15*s.*

"If," remarks Dr. Reichard, in her chapter on "Social Life," "we could stand apart and view ourselves and our own behaviour with due perspective, we should not be more surprised at the customs of primitive people than at our own." It is of the utmost importance that sociologists should thus "stand apart" if they are to free themselves from the parochialism of the Here and Now. This is a book which will help them to attain that detachment without which no serious sociological work can be done. Dr. Boas and a team of distinguished anthropologists, which include Dr. Ruth Benedict, authoress of *Patterns of Culture*,

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have accumulated into one volume an extraordinary amount of information. There are chapters on "Human Origins," "Race," and "Prehistoric Archæology" for those who are interested in flint implements, and having got such preliminaries out of the way, the stage is ready for a series of chapters on all aspects of primitive life. It is the most complete work of its kind attainable, and very strongly to be recommended. Of course, no book on anthropology can be complete enough to satisfy everyone, but every succeeding volume comes closer to the ideal of serving as an introduction to the complexities of the culture patterns with which we are intimately familiar. One fact stands out with a clarity which will plunge some readers into despair, and delight a great many others, and that is that every generalisation which has ever been put forward about primitive communities turns out to be wrong. It looks as though each culture has to be taken separately, and treated as an individual. This does not make the task of the sociologist any easier, but a realisation of the importance of, for example, the religious beliefs and notions of prestige specific to any given community may prevent him from being taken in by such specious doctrines as "economic determinism" which aim at putting all the eggs into one basket. It is only by getting the "feel" of different culture patterns that we can appreciate the peculiarities of our own, and for that reason books of this kind are to be welcomed.

The Vic-Wells Ballet. By GORDON ANTHONY. *Routledge.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

This book contains a collection of fifty or so full-page photographs of members of the Sadlers Wells Ballet, prefaced by a somewhat intricately composed account, by Ninette de Valois, of the company's past, present, and proposed future. It is a timely tribute to the dancers, and also to de Valois herself, whose creation and consolidation of a permanent English ballet have been a work of organisational, tuitional, and artistic genius. Gordon Anthony has very sensibly kept himself within the legitimate scope of the camera by giving studies of the individual dancers, and forgoing any attempt to make a photographic record of the ballets, a task which can only be accomplished satisfactorily with the aid of a ciné camera. As photographs all the studies are good, though one at times regrets Mr. Anthony's tiresome insistence upon shadows. He demonstrates particularly well the versatility of Helpmann, the grace of Fonteyn, and the sculptural beauty of Pearl Argyle; there are also excellent portraits of Ashton, Chappell and Somes. One of the present shortcomings of the company is that the less prominent dancers, though technically proficient, have not yet acquired the art of putting their personalities across; as a result there is about many of these photographs a certain air of insipidity which, one feels, would not be apparent in a similar collection devoted to one of the Russian companies. This, however, cannot be blamed upon Mr. Anthony, and should not dissuade any Vic-Wells enthusiast from placing this well-produced and reasonably priced book amongst his Haskells and Beaumonts.

Vital Speech. By HAROLD J. RIPPER. *Methuen.* 5*s.*

Books about the art of speaking usually frighten the aspirant away with diagrams of the larynx, or a set of phonetic signs which are quite private to the author. Mr. Ripper's book has neither of these obstacles. It is a useful piece of work based on experience and common sense. He shows a first-hand knowledge of the difficulties which beset and inhibit the person who is conscious of faulty speech, and he begins straight away by dealing with what he calls "devitalisation." This opening chapter enumerates all the accidents by which the speaking voice of the adult individual may be restricted; social, muscular and mechanical, and nervous. It discovers that they begin to do their destructive work as soon as the unself-consciousness of early childhood is lost. The rest of the book takes these accidents one by one and sets about to remedy them.

The main argument is that in general all these troubles are due to one thing, self-consciousness; and are to be cured in one way, by the acquisition of self-confidence. It is not easy, as the detail of the book shows. And Mr. Ripper argues also that it is not made easier by a lot of technical contortionism and dreary discipline. The discipline he would impose is a firm one, but it is emotional rather than mechanical. A warning which he reiterates throughout the book is that "one profound mistake which seems to be made by many who have studied elocution is the conscious use of breath as the origin of tone. The true origin of tone is the desire for tone. Tone which is breath-driven is insensitive to thought and feeling." That is the principle upon which his book is founded. It is calculated to give confidence to the reader, so that the battle is half-won from the beginning. That is why the book is to be warmly recommended to people who want to express their thoughts and their personalities in speech which will give pleasure and command respect.

Atlantic Circle. By LORD MOYNE. *Blackie.* 18*s.*

Like Lear's Four Little Children, Lord Moyne and his party set out to sail round the world—or rather, the Atlantic. Mr. John Colman undertook the Marine Biology, and Lady Broughton took her camera (her photographs are the mainstay of the book—they are very good indeed). They discovered that the Eskimo of Angmagssalik now follow Gino Watkins' example and bathe for pleasure. The party was happily unable to embark on an iceberg, and encountered a similar difficulty at New York. In Central America the Rosaura struck lucky, and Lord Moyne purchased from the natives of Bay Islands a fine collection of pots (now in the British Museum), which the party, for better or worse, was unable to excavate for themselves. The fine ruins of Chichenitza were photographed, and, by way of change, an aeroplane carried the explorers over Guatemala. Damage to the Rosaura was discovered on reaching Africa, and the "travellers were obliged to resolve on pursuing their wanderings by land" (by bus across the Sahara) "resolved to carry out the rest of their travelling plans at some more favourable opportunity."

Elizabeth of Bohemia ("The Winter Queen"). By CAROLA OMAN. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 18*s.*

From the gallery of the unlucky Stuarts, whose portraits have appeared to us in countless biographies and novels, Miss Oman has chosen a subject more or less fortunate in having been somewhat overlooked. Elizabeth, to whom both Donne and Wotton wrote celebrated poems, was the daughter of James I. The book follows her career from the Scottish Court to the English Court; to Germany on her marriage to Frederick, Elector Palatine; to Bohemia where they reigned for a few months only; to Holland where she spent most of her exile; and her return to England during her final illness, where she died in 1662. During her life she saw the beginning and the end of The Thirty Years' War, for which Bohemia had provided the spark. She saw a decisive blow struck at the divine right of kings when her brother, Charles I, met his death on the scaffold; saw her son, Prince Rupert, take to piracy on the high seas; the rule of the Protector become a virtual dictatorship, and the final restoration of her nephew, Charles II. This elaborately detailed and authoritative book constructs a vivid picture of the social life of the royal aristocracy of Europe in an interesting and important period. Wherever possible the biographer uses the memoirs and letters of the times to build up an authentic and sustained portrait. The illustrations are excellent.

Week-end Competitions

No. 466

Set by Yahoo

The *Daily Express* announced the death of Yeats under the headline: Scoffed At Fairies, But They Made His Living. Competitors are invited to submit headlines summarising in an equally felicitous style the achievements of any other great poet. Prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea are offered for the best set of three suggestions.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, February 10.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 464

Set by Raymond Alderson

An adventurous big game hunter, alone on safari, fell into the hands of a cannibal tribe, whose headman he discovered to be his erstwhile fag. His sins are visited on him; he had bullied the black gentleman unmercifully at school, so, disregarding former ties, the headman decided not to deviate from family tradition. However, before the basting, he allowed his captive, who had no family, to write a batch of letters, which he guaranteed would reach their destination. The usual prizes are offered for the best two letters, each not exceeding 150 words, written the morning of the ceremony to: (*a*) The Barmaid at the Clod and Pitchfork; (*b*) His Housemaster; (*c*) His Clever Friend; (*d*) The *Times*.

Report by Raymond Alderson

I know a great deal more about big game hunters now, than I did at the beginning of the week-end. The odd thing is that they stay put at an early stage in their development—finding its apex when they leave school—and then they go steadily backwards, till they have soon reached their Prep. schools again. There is almost overwhelming evidence to prove that big game hunters do not grow up, but stay the same beastly little creatures they were at school, with a strangely elastic code of honour, so the rare exceptions when they are given intelligence must be

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

The HEATH CLARK LECTURES under the general title "EUROPE AND WEST AFRICA: SOME PROBLEMS OF ADJUSTMENT" will be given at the LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND TROPICAL MEDICINE (Keppel Street, Gower Street, W.C.1) at 5.30 p.m. as follows: FEBRUARY 13th—DR. C. K. MEEK on "The Changing Cultures of West Africa"; FEBRUARY 15th—DR. C. K. MEEK on "Administration and Cultural Change"; FEBRUARY 17th—PROF. W. M. MACMILLAN on "Economic Structure and Economic History"; FEBRUARY 20th—PROF. W. M. MACMILLAN on "Land and Social Change"; FEBRUARY 22nd—PROF. W. M. MACMILLAN on "Society in Reconstruction"; FEBRUARY 24th—MR. E. R. J. HUSSEY on "The Role of Education in Assisting the People of West Africa to adjust themselves to the Changing Conditions due to European Contacts." At the First, Fifth and Sixth Lectures the Chair will be taken by Sir Donald Cameron, G.C.M.G., K.B.E.

A Course of Two Lectures on "AIR-RAID PRECAUTIONS ORGANISATION AND ITS RELATION TO IMPERIAL DEFENCE" will be given by MAJOR-GENERAL H. L. PRITCHARD, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. (Colonel Commandant, Royal Engineers) at THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: THE SENATE HOUSE (entrance from Russell Square or Malet Street, W.C.1) on FEBRUARY 17th and 20th at 5.30 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by Marshal of the Royal Air Force the Viscount Trenchard, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., D.S.O.

ADMISSION FREE, WITHOUT TICKET.

S. J. WORSLEY,
Academic Registrar.

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, Aldwych, W.C.2.

G. D. H. COLE will give six lectures on THE MODERN DEVELOPMENT OF CONSUMERS' CO-OPERATION.

Mondays, commencing February 6th. Fee for Course: 2s. 6d. Single lecture: 6d. Tickets from TONGUE, 18 Prescot Street, E.1. Roy. 6985.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, February 5th, at 11 a.m., MR. JAMES COHEN (from the Zionist Federation): "THE JEWISH PROBLEM." 6.30 p.m., MRS. FLEMMING: "IS ANYONE NOT NEEDED?"

HAMPSTEAD RUSSIA TO-DAY SOCIETY. W. J. R. Squance on Soviet Trade Unions. 153 Finchley Road, N.W.3, 8.15 p.m., Friday, Feb. 10th. Admission 6d. and 1s.

"WORLD ECONOMY AS A SOLUTION OF THE PRESENT CRISIS." A public lecture by Geo. S. Francis at the Friends House, Euston Road, W.C.1, on Wednesday, February 8th, at 8 p.m. Tickets 1s. 6d. at the door or from the RUDOLF STEINER INSTITUTE, 22 Chenies Street, W.C.1.

REIMANN SHORT LECTURES

"DESIGN FACTORS AND THE MODERN DISPLAY," by Arthur J. Symes, Joint Editor of Display. Chairman: Basil Marriott. February 10th, at 6.15 p.m.
REIMANN SCHOOL, Regency St., S.W.1. Vic. 3131. Write for Lecture List.

SEX EDUCATION CENTRE, 13 Eccleston Street S.W.1. Consultations, 1s.; Library books, 2d. Catalogue, 6d. Open Mondays, 7–9 p.m. Visitors welcomed.

"REINCARNATION." A public lecture by Dr. Eugene Kolisko at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square (off Holborn), W.C.1, on Thursday, February 9th, at 8 p.m. Tickets 1s. 6d. at door or from the "Modern Mystic and Monthly Science Review," 6 Bear Street, Leicester Square, W.C.2.

DR. I. TANNOUS will speak on "PALESTINE: THE ARAB CASE," at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, on Tuesday next, the 7th inst., at 7 p.m. ADMISSION FREE.

SEX EDUCATION SOCIETY

A. S. NEILL will speak on "SEX AND THE ADOLESCENT" on Monday, Feb. 6th, at 8 p.m., Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Chairman: Dr. Norman Haire. Members free. Non-Members, 2s. Tickets may be obtained at Hall on evening of Lecture.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, February 5th, at 11 a.m., PROFESSOR J. C. FLUGEL, D.Sc.: "MIND AND BODY—SOME NEW SIDELIGHTS ON AN OLD PROBLEM." 6.30 p.m., Concert Chamber Music. Admission free. Visitors welcome.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL SOCIETY, 153 Finchley Road (Swiss Cottage). Sunday, February 5th, at 6.15, PROF. J. D. BERNAL: "THE SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF SCIENCE." (Discussion.)

MUSICIANS' Group Left Book Club. Next meeting Sunday, Feb. 5th, 7.30 p.m., M.M. Club, Argyll Street, W.1. Speakers: Paul Eisler, Alan Bush.

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looked on as abnormal. Yorick even gives a note to his psychologically sound letters: "I imagine he was a simple soul—I don't think he would at that crisis have written to the Barmaid or the *Times*. The whole point being, I take it, that he and the nigger were equally (and perhaps rather too much) creatures of tradition." Correct. Strong Silents made a few explosive outbursts and one was even credited with ingenuity when R. L. Watts made his friend Roderick Livingstone-Rhodes write a letter to the *Times*, the first letter of each word making an appeal for help, but I very much doubt if that austere organ would suspect a double purpose in any letter, especially as the letter in question came from a B.G.H. At his best the B.G.H. is a facetious creature and refers constantly to the good old school, the good old bar-parlour and the good old Chamberlain. I liked Ellen Evans' Postscripts to the Barmaid and the Housemaster, saying that a leopard skin was being forwarded to make into a rug for the Bar Parlour and that the latter would receive a tigerskin to hang in the library. There was a general move to give the chief his tie for a waistband and there are two cases of school crests on the cooking pots. L. Marshall Jones was under direct compulsion for not only were the letters left open, but the one to Dolly was a letter of introduction. The following sentiment appeared three times in divers forms—this is taken from Sir Robert Witt's letter to the *Times*:

> I reminded the Chief that I was under the British Raj (I trust I spell it correctly, so far from books), and was therefore entitled to the powerful protection of Mr. Chamberlain, a view I am sure, Sir, you will support. In reply the Chief referred me to a Monsieur Boulestin as more likely to be interested in my case.

The B.G.H. who had not yet started their mental recession were impressed by the considerate attitude of the Chief. D. G. Varda went so far as to give him a necessary tin of BiSoDol, and a P.S. in the Housemaster's letter to say that:

> Bosambo sends you his love, and says he really prefers schoolboys, and can you forward some C.O.D.?

Most victims thought of the dark African interior and I liked E. H. Bidwell's effort to his clever friend—

> Well, it's good-bye. Though no cleric, I'm about to be the latest victim of clerico-colonial fate, and realise the staple situation of English humour ever since the Cloth went to the Cannibals. I'm going to pot—going to be a dinner for the local man-eaters. (Those modernist-sociological ideas of ours about keeping the savages savage as against making them little Christians look a bit phony to me at the moment. Our-day Christians at least let their victims live.)
>
> The chief cook, amazingly enough, turns out to be my former fag. For my benefit he's taken to wearing our old school-tie over his nakedness, hanging down from his waist like a narrow sporran, "thus symbolising," he says, as he stirs the pot, "all the decencies of civilisation he ever learnt at an English school." As for savagery, he attributes all his success to his having been my fag.
>
> Yours to ashes.

Richard Massie, Polydore, John Usborne, D. Scott-Mole were all good, but the first prize goes to Richard Usborne's "Hearty," who sent in two entries, one slightly better than the other, and in this latter chose as his clever friend Mr. Cyril C. and asked him to break the news to his mother—although I stipulated no family—

You're clever, and could break it to her so that she'd never be sure.

John Fay gets the second prize; he is one of the abnormals, but he went to a University before the irresistible call of B.G.H. and can be allowed a modicum of erudition.

FIRST PRIZE

I.—THE HOUSEMASTER

DEAR MR. JAMESON,

This is from "somewhere East of Sokoto," and it's to tell you that I've just met an old B House fellow, my fag, Borria, who we agreed then would never even learn table manners, let alone be a credit to us. Fact is, and out of school, he's gone completely to the bad now. Has several wives, and wears nothing but those 1st VIII swimming slips, breakfast, lunch *and* dinner. And . . . there are some things no white man can speak of. Between you and me and the lines, sir, would you ask the Head to remove his name from the O.E. list? His attitude to me (his "guest") is definitely hostile, and even when I gave the old B House fag-call, he remained unmoved.

Did you win the Corps Cup again this year? Can you get this letter into the Mag?

Goodbye,
THOMAS FOULSHAM

II.—THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES"

SIR,

Except when I've been abroad on safari (as I am now), I read the *Times* daily. Either for the racing, or the golf. Good old Bernardo! I shan't read him again.

When this is published, some new corner of a foreign field will be always England, as Sapper said. I have fallen in with a tribe of man-eating lesser breeds without the law. (The headman's interpretation of the laws of decency are "precious fluid.")

The temperatures are stifling, and it looks like getting hotter. I hoped to send you an article on the Old Etonians in West Africa, but it cannot be. Don't send Fleming on an expedition after me. This is no place for a Public School Boy.

I always went down well with my acquaintances. I hope that in death it will be the same. Please spell my name right.

Yours,
THOMAS FOULSHAM

SECOND PRIZE

I.—TO HIS HOUSEMASTER

MY DEAR WHISKERS,

I have fallen into the hands of a savage tribe and am to be put to death to-morrow, so I shall not be able to come to the House Supper this year. Don't be afraid: I never let down the House in my life, and in my death I will remember proudly that I am an Old Grenvillian. I am sorry to say that the headman of the tribe is none other than young Surrendra, who kept wicket when we beat Cobham by an innings: I had thought that House spirit would have rendered him more respectful of authority. Give my regards to young Peter Smith-Bingham—I still remember his fair hair and blue eyes. I hope we win the P.T. competition and the Junior Squash Cup. Having been under you for five years I shall not be afraid of death. Yours sincerely,

JOHN FAY

II.—TO HIS CLEVER FRIEND

MY DEAR BYSSHE,

Fare you well, for ill fare I;
Live, lads, and I will die.

I had not thought to shed a tear over Housman, but now his lines seem piteously real. My May of life is spent, the wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees is left this vault to brag of. To-morrow I die. I have fallen into the hands of the Philistines, and, naked to mine enemies, to-morrow I am to be sacrificed on the altars of unrighteousness. Last of all, last word spoken is "good-bye," and though there would have been a time for such a word, my life is to be taken from me untimely. If the public demands it, publish my letters which are in a box at home, but don't forget that I never meant them to see light of day. "A shade Byronic" is all the obituary notice I want. Like Byron, now I must sleep, and, as Donne said, one short sleep past, we rest eternally.

Your ever-faithful friend,
JOHN

P.S.—The box of my letters is in my bedroom: you can't miss it.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 318.—WE WERE RACKING OUR BRAINS

We were racking our brains to remember the number of George's motor car.

"It was a number of three digits," I said.

"That's right," said Denis. "Under 500, I'm sure."

"And a prime number," said Muriel.

We brooded for some moments over these very inadequate data.

Then Clara said suddenly: "It was equal to the sum of two squares."

"The squares of integers?" asked Henry.

"The squares of integers."

"Quite right," said Walter. "I noticed that too. And one of them ——" He named a number.

We all began to make suggestions. Unfortunately, no two of us had the same suggestion to make. We were about to abandon our quest when Elsie had a brainwave. "Clara!" she said, "Don't you remember? The digital total of George's motor car number is 8."

What is the number?

PROBLEM 316.—THE MAD HISTORIAN

Solution by A. J. White

Let A be the Catharine Howard legacy
" B " Catharine of Aragon legacy
" C " Jane Seymour legacy
" D " Anne Boleyn legacy
" E " Anne of Cleves legacy

Then by elimination from the data we get:

$$4C = A^2 + 4$$
$$2C = D^2 + 1$$

Now we know that C must be not far below a third of 500,000. Hence D^2 must not be far below 333,332. The first square below this figure is 332,929 or 577^2. We then find that:

$$2(577^2 + 1) - 4 = 665,856 = 816^2$$

—or in other words the values of A and D for the above equations are 816 and 577 respectively. It now becomes simple to find the amounts of the rest of the legacies and these are:

The Catharine Howard legacy	.. ..	816 crowns
" Catharine of Aragon legacy	.. ..	166,464 "
" Jane Seymour legacy	.. ..	166,465 "
" Anne Boleyn legacy	.. ..	577 "
" Anne of Cleves legacy	.. ..	166,463 "

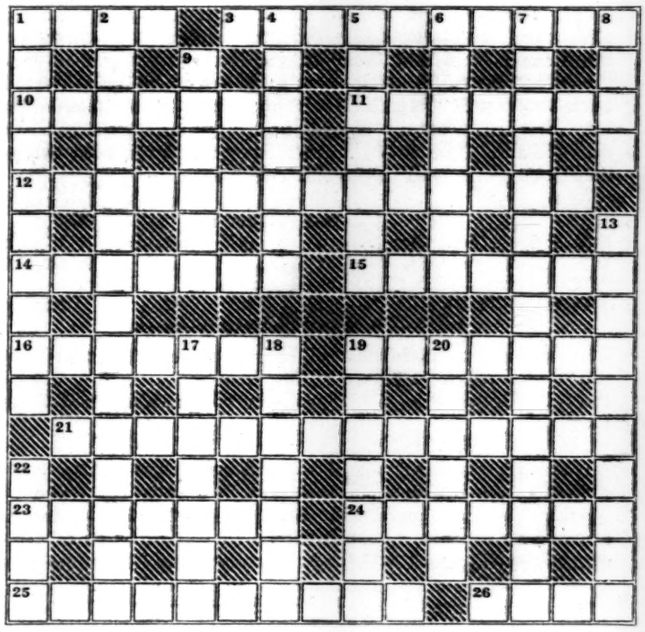
PROBLEM 315

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: G. A. Dirac, 7 Cavendish Avenue, Cambridge. *Four* points are awarded. CALIBAN

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 465

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

F. C. Geary, Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

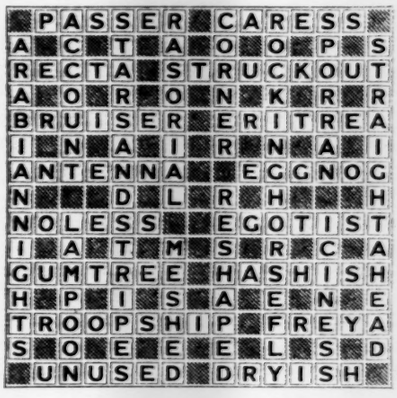
ACROSS

1. Wrinkle for the shepherd. (4)
3. Fit for the Old Curiosity Shop. (10)
10. Fashionably nailed on. (7)
11. Chemical description of beef perhaps? (7)
12. Plots for the gallows? (14)
14. You might expect pastoral letters to be so distributed. (7)
15. Essential for finished articles. (7)
16. Privately given to any army officer. (7)
19. You can eat bits of it. (7)
21. Object in the bag of Counsel for the Prosecution? (14)
23. One of CharlesI's unconstitutional levies. (7)
24. Via this to Rome, like every other way, in olden days. (7)
25. Do this to gain 9/10ths of the law no doubt. (10)
26. Very likely sea-rounded. (4)

DOWN

1. For rubbing shoulders. (10)
2. This does not give the unskilled motorist liberty to ignore the rules of the road. (15)
4. Flowers of the habitual reveller? (7)
5. To a 26 for a change. (7)
6. Una died broke. (7)
7. Not horse boxes for the railway. (15)
8. Not by any means still waters. (4)
9. Having no mortal significance whatever. (6)
13. The fool always had his food. (10)
17. Take the players through the provinces? (7)
18. One might perhaps learn to have these by playing at pitch and toss. (7)
19. The lad's rib is broken. (7)
20. Or they would go round speculatively. (6)
22. Enables one to get a small rise perhaps. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



Company Meeting

F. W. WOOLWORTH & CO. LTD.

MR. W. L. STEPHENSON'S ADDRESS

THE Thirtieth Annual General Meeting of F. W. Woolworth and Company, Ltd., was held on January 27th in London.

Mr. W. L. Stephenson (the chairman) presided, and in the course of his speech said: The company has in 1938 reached a new high level in sales and consequent profits. This is doubly pleasing when we realise that 1938 was by no means a boom year. The remunerative business enjoyed during the Coronation period of 1937 was only partially countered by improved Scottish business resulting from the Glasgow Exhibition. Later came the crisis, when we, in common with other shopkeepers, found the people, with gloom and uncertainty in their hearts, had little inclination to buy. Happily, as we shall always thankfully recall, this passed and trade resumed its normal course, with the result that by the end of the year we found that in our old stores we had made a gain in sales which, though small in percentage, represented a considerable volume in itself.

Expansion also helped considerably to produce the results we are examining. Last year I was able to tell you that in 1937 there were thirty-four additional stores opened and a large number of improvements in old stores. Only partial benefit from these additions fell into 1937, but for last year the full weight of these improvements was enjoyed. Similarly, twenty-six new stores and forty enlargements and replacements brought about during 1938 were only partially effective for that year, but will produce a full year's business in the current year. The number of stores actually in operation at the close of the year was 737.

The net profit, after all expenses and depreciation, at £6,961,141 8*s*. 11*d*. is an increase of £471,127, which represents a gain of 7.26 per cent. After the deduction of tax the profit is £4,929,395, an increase of £136,448, which represents a gain in real profit of 2.85 per cent.

Stocks of merchandise on hand, despite the considerable addition to selling space, are lower than at previous inventory. This reduction in stock was deliberately brought about and certain departments were permitted to run down, as towards the end of the year it became evident that some types of merchandise were easing in price. The merchandising of the stores has reached a very high state of efficiency.

THE OUTLOOK

In regard to the prospects of business for this present year, everything of course depends upon whether we are going to be blessed with a continuation of peace. Supposing, however, that the worst happens and political and racial intolerance compels our country to defend itself. If that time should unfortunately arrive, the State will demand not only men and money but every kind of industrial and commercial machinery that might be of assistance in administering affairs under war-time conditions. Your board therefore fail to find any justifiable reason for removing from this great organisation the tradition of continual improvement and expansion, which would cause deterioration in the effectiveness of the personnel, resulting in contraction of trade. If we have continuation of peace we can profitably enlarge the scope of our operations, but if—in my opinion a remote possibility—war should come upon us, then the matter of more or less profit would sink to insignificance. And so the board proposes to proceed and to carry on with every energy.

Schemes for expansion in the present year requiring an expenditure of £2,500,000 have already been approved. If the whole programme is completed as anticipated during the present year, it will mean the addition of rather more than one new store per week and no less than seventy-five extensions and replacements of old stores. This is a much more extensive programme than we have had in recent years, and apart from the large number of small stores, it provides for greater sales space in old stores, a process which continues from year to year with the aim of keeping the business up to date and providing more adequate means of displaying the increasing range of articles.

Side by side with this growth in plant is the increase in the number of employees. It is impossible to sustain progress without a sufficient number of trained and capable persons to knit into the fabric of the growing organisation, and I am happy to tell the stockholders that we have an ample reserve of very good trained material.

There have already been paid dividends on the Preference shares and an interim dividend of 9*d*. per share on the Ordinary shares.

The directors now recommend that the available balance should be dealt with as follows:—Transfer to Freehold Building Reserve, £100,000; transfer to Reserve for Staff Benevolent Fund, £110,000; payment on February 1st next of a final dividend of 1*s*. 9*d*. per unit, less income tax, on 30,000,000 5*s*. units of Ordinary stock; and payment on the same date on the Ordinary stock of 9*d*. per unit cash bonus, less income tax. These recommendations will require £2,928,750 and will leave to carry forward £5,468,445, which adds £967,520 to the company's surplus. The report was unanimously adopted.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

"BEAR" COVERING—INDUSTRIALS *v.* RAILWAYS—GERMANY'S ECONOMY

THE recovery on the Stock Exchange began a day before Hitler's speech—on "bear" covering. The relative moderation of the speech, indicating at any rate a short respite from war scares, caused something like a scramble on the part of the remaining "bears" to cover their short positions. The rise in prices which followed the speech was therefore quite spectacular. I stress the importance of "bear" covering, for it is advisable to correct the popular impression that the City lives in a state of jitters at the sound of Hitler's voice. The recent fall in the stock markets certainly indicated the probability of an early war, but it was a view held by the speculator and not by the genuine investor. It was satisfactory to find that new money actually came into the market on Wednesday on the rise. Funds were attracted to the leading industrial shares of the stable dividend class, the yield on which had become relatively high in relation to the gilt-edged yield. For example, a year ago the Actuaries' Investment Index showed an average yield on industrial equity shares of 4.85 per cent. when the yield on 2½ per cent. Consols was 3.27 per cent.—a margin of 1.58 per cent. To-day 2½ per cent. Consols is yielding 3.57 per cent. and industrial equities on the average 6.48 per cent. according to the same Index—a margin of 2.91. The margin has never been wider in recent years. I give below examples of the stable dividend shares which are still on an attractive yield basis by comparison with gilt-edged :—

	Price Jan. 27	Price Feb. 1	Dividend %	Yield %
Imperial Tobacco £1 ..	6 5/16	6 5/16	25 net	£5 2 9
Imperial Chemical £1 ..	27/9	30/9	8½	*£5 13 0
Woolworth 5/-	54/-	59/9	65	£5 8 9
Unilever £1	31/-	34/-	10	*£6 3 0
Distillers £1	86/3	90 7½	22½	£4 19 3
For comparison I give the prices and yield of 2½% Consols :—				
2½% Consols	78 7/8	70¼	2½	£3 11 3

* Equivalent gross after allowing for Dominion Income Tax Relief.

Of course, from an operating point of view, the time to buy these stable dividend equities is during a panic and not after. It would be absurd to hold out for the investor the prospect of a relief from tension in international affairs for very long. There is bound to be a recurrence of market "nerves" until a halt is called to German rearmament. For the long view, no doubt investors will come to no harm in buying equities to yield 2 per cent. more than old Consols. For the short view I would sooner buy a really speculative home railway stock on the grounds that the railway managements are near to an agreement with the road interests on their "Square Deal" proposals which should enable the Government to pass legislation giving a substantial relief to the railroads. The fall in home railway stocks has been exceptionally steep this year as the next table shows :—

	Prices Jan. 3	Prices Feb. 1	Dividend %	Potential Yield %
L.M. & S. 4% Preference ..	50	43½	est. 3½	£8 1 0
L. & N.E. 4% 2nd Guaranteed	62	51½	4	£7 15 6
G.W. Ordinary	28¼	25	*	—
Southern 5% Pref. Ordinary..	57½	53½	est. 3	£5 12 9

* Only a "token" dividend is expected.

The earnings and dividends will shortly be published and I am looking for relatively better results from the London Midland and Scottish than from the London and North Eastern and Great Western.

* * *

However reassuring, for the immediate future at least, the content of the Führer's Reichstag speech may be, its economic implications are not particularly palatable from the City standpoint. Not merely is there apparently to be an intensification of Germany's subsidised export drive; there were disquieting references in the speech to the stranglehold of foreign indebtedness, and, in his prognostications of the future industrial and financial organisation of the Reich, Herr Hitler was almost brutally anti-capitalistic. National Socialism, now that Dr. Schacht has been dismissed, appears to be swinging significantly back to the ideas of the "Old Guard" of 1932. In the monetary sphere it looks as though the last check has been removed on German inflation. The Führer is said to have discovered in himself a great and unsuspected aptitude for solving monetary problems. His instruction to Herr Funk that the capital market must be expanded so as to permit of both State and industrial borrowing obviously means that the Reichsbank must pump new money into the banking system. How is this to be done without that rise in living costs which Herr Funk is simultaneously enjoined to avert? One story is that Hitler proposes to issue a fancy form of internal Reichsmark notes obtainable by the public at a discount and redeemed ultimately at par by the State. This scheme might momentarily disguise the social effects of inflation, but the day of reckoning would come soon unless the Reich could pillage another (and this time necessarily non-Semitic) hen-roost. There is the property of the Churches in Germany, and there is the possibility of confiscation of land and rentier capital over a certain limit. More obvious victims, at any rate for a beginning, are Germany's foreign creditors and the London merchant bankers who are carrying the *Stillhalte* short-term frozen debts.

* * *

Herr Hitler's refusal to admit criticism of German export trade methods, and his slogan "Germany must export or die," have not created a very favourable atmosphere for the coming negotiations between the F.B.I. delegation and the German Industrial Group's representatives. It has, however, proved possible to conclude an Anglo-German agreement in the relatively simple matter of coal exports. Details are not yet available, but the fact that quotas have provisionally been settled points to the possibility of the formation of a comprehensive European coal cartel covering both market allocations and prices. Last year British coal exporters fared better than German. Whereas Germany's coal shipments fell in 1938 by 25 per cent., the decline in the case of British sales abroad was little more than 10 per cent. The average price per ton shipped rose, in Britain's case, from about 18*s.* 6*d.* to slightly over 20*s.* per ton. Thanks to central selling, British export prices have risen by 4*s.* per ton in the past ten years, and this enhancement of price has been accompanied by a drop of nearly 25 million tons in volume—to say nothing of the displacement of coal by oil bunkers for shipping. From the point of view of employment in the British coalfields, it is to be hoped that the projected international cartel will not lose sight of the fact that coal is a very vulnerable fuel, and can be replaced readily by competitive oil supplies.

National Provincial Bank Limited

ESTABLISHED 1833

Statement of Liabilities and Assets December 31st, 1938

LIABILITIES

Capital paid up	£9,479,416 0 0
Reserve Fund	8,500,000 0 0
Current, Deposit and other Accounts	310,956,984 19 5
Liabilities for Acceptances, Endorsements, Engagements, etc. ...	7,951,838 13 6
	£336,888,239 12 11

ASSETS

Coin, Bank Notes and Balances with the Bank of England	34,320,774 1 2
Balances with, and Cheques in course of collection on, other Banks in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and Cheques, Drafts, etc., in transit	10,650,986 16 3
Money at Call and Short Notice ...	17,991,279 14 11
Bills Discounted	32,189,714 5 4
Investments	86,802,778 19 6
Advances to Customers and other Accounts	139,586,103 14 8
Bank Premises	7,394,763 7 7
Liabilities of Customers for Acceptances, Endorsements, Engagements, etc.	7,951,838 13 6
	£336,888,239 12 11

HEAD OFFICE:

15, Bishopsgate, London, E.C. 2

AFFILIATED BANKS:

COUTTS & CO. GRINDLAY & CO. LTD.

Company Meeting

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

LORD WARDINGTON'S ADDRESS

THE Eighty-first Ordinary General Meeting of the Shareholders was held on January 27th, in London.

Lord Wardington (Chairman of the Bank) presided and said (in part): The total due on Current, Deposit, and other Accounts has been comparatively well maintained at a figure showing a reduction of £12,000,000 in the year. The reduction under this heading is due to two principal causes. In the first place to the amalgamation of a large group of accounts which previously figured on both sides of our books. The remaining part of our reduction is widespread over our system, and the balances have been withdrawn for investment, or in search of a higher return of interest than that which we felt justified in offering.

On the Assets side of our Balance Sheet, the liquid assets of cash, money at call, etc., bear very much the same proportions to our deposits as they did last year, but you will be glad to notice the welcome increase of £3,000,000 under the heading of British and Colonial and Foreign Bills.

LOANS AND ADVANCES

Loans and Advances, the most important item of our assets, show a reduction of over £6,000,000, which undoubtedly is a disappointment, and if those who insist that banks should be forced to increase their credit facilities can tell us how this can be done, in the absence of willing and credit worthy borrowers, no persuasion, let alone force, would be required to induce banks to comply.

Those engaged in Agriculture, though they are borrowing less than they did a few years ago, have taken slightly more from us this year than last, and again I must pay a tribute to the farming community for the remarkably small amount of bad debts which we have suffered under the heading of Agriculture.

The final figure of our Profit and Loss is £127,000 less than last year, but in a period of reduced loans and turnover, and on the other hand of increased costs, such as National Defence Contribution, and tens of thousands spent on Air Raid Precautions, which latter we devoutly hope will not be a recurring item, I think we may be justified in thinking that a sum of £1,705,000 is not unsatisfactory.

AN ANXIOUS YEAR

I think it might not be without interest to see how our financial situation has stood the strain of last year and what lessons we ought to have learned. Perhaps the most instructive line of approach is for me to compare shortly the events and possibilities of last September with those of similar anxiety in August, 1914. At that date we had a currency almost entirely of gold, and the fiduciary issue was limited to £18,000,000. At the same time, the Bank's gold reserves on July 29th only amounted to £37,000,000. There was thus a real danger of a rapid exhaustion of the Bank's gold reserves. The problem of meeting the public's increased currency needs was met by the creation of Treasury Notes.

These had to be hurriedly improvised, and, incidentally, the banks were empowered to borrow Treasury Notes up to the limit of 25 per cent. of their deposit liabilities. Comparatively little use was made of this facility, but the fact that it was available gave instant relief and at the same time checked any tendency to withdraw deposits. Ultimately the Treasury issue was taken over by the Bank of England on behalf of the Treasury in 1928. At the same time the fiduciary note issue was established at £260,000,000 (compared with £18,000,000 in July, 1914) but with the very important reservation that the limit could either be expanded or reduced under defined conditions. After being reduced to £200,000,000, with a seasonal increase of £30,000,000 over last Christmas, we have seen within the last few weeks how it has been increased to a total of £400,000,000.

The next problem arose from the fact that large credits had been issued by banks and accepting houses to their clients all over the world. Failure to meet these bills on maturity would have involved the Discount Market and the whole British banking system in serious trouble and loss. After a temporary moratorium it was arranged for the Bank of England to take over approved pre-moratorium bills without recourse to the holder, and to hold the bills in cold storage until the end of the war. The Government guaranteed the Bank against loss, and the acceptor who was liable for payment of the bill was charged interest at 2 per cent. over Bank Rate.

Another series of important problems arose in connection with the Stock Exchange. At the end of July, 1914, there were many open positions on the Stock Exchange, and a large number of these were financed directly or indirectly by the banks. As a consequence the Stock Exchange remained closed from July 31st 1914, until the beginning of 1915, and minimum prices were fixed for most first-class securities.

These are only a few of the problems and the methods of meeting them which arose in 1914. If we pass on to September, 1938, the first point which springs to light is the far greater elasticity of our monetary and banking system compared with that of 1914. First, for good or for evil, we were no longer on the gold standard. There was, it is true, an abnormal demand for currency, but this demand was not due to any feeling of panic. The real point of contrast is this. In 1914, a new paper currency had to be created in order to satisfy the wartime demand, and the banks remained shut for three days, while the currency was improvised. Last September, on the other hand, the big increase in the note circulation took place entirely automatically and with no disturbance at all.

EXTERNAL FINANCIAL RELATIONS

I pass next to our external financial relations. Here the first point of contrast is that we were not faced once more with the 1914 problem of outstanding bills accepted in London on behalf of overseas clients. Secondly, there is the fact that many bills in the London market have since the crisis in 1931 been subject to the various standstill schemes.

Last year's anxiety over our external position arose in quite a different way. For years past a mass of floating unemployed capital has been constantly shifting from one centre to another, the motive behind the migrations being generally a search for safety rather than a desire for profit. Much of this money had found refuge in London. So soon as the possibility of war emerged it began to flow to other centres, and if war had broken out, or even had the crisis been prolonged, the stream might have developed into a torrent, and even as it was a considerable strain was put upon the Exchanges.

We were, however, in a much stronger position to protect ourselves. In contrast to 1914, when the Bank of England only held £37,000,000 of gold, with perhaps £130,000,000 of gold coin in the pockets of the public and the tills of the banks, the Bank of England's own reserves valued at 140s. came to £538,000,000, while the Exchange Equalisation Account—a new factor since 1914—held £297,000,000.

The past year has seen a fall in the sterling-dollar rate from round about $5.00 to round about $4.65. This fall is a matter for regret. But it took place without weakening the friendly relations which existed between the parties to the Tripartite Agreement.

STOCK EXCHANGE PRECAUTIONS

So far as the Stock Exchange was concerned, there was one fundamental difference between August, 1914, and September, 1938. Twenty-four years ago war came as a complete bombshell. By last September, however, the danger had been foreseen weeks and even months ahead. Nevertheless, as the danger of war became more imminent, there was a general fall in prices, chiefly because no one cared to buy securities. A day or two before the culminating point of the crisis, therefore, minimum prices were fixed for a wide range of Government securities, and the Stock Exchange agreed of its own volition not to deal below those prices. This was a very desirable precaution. The intrinsic soundness of these securities was beyond question, and bankers and others had very properly been accustomed to accept them as collateral for loans. The fall in their market price was reaching the point where the margin of security was disappearing, and so a serious banking and credit problem was beginning to arise. Let me say at once that no banker would have thought of calling in his loans just because the value of his collateral was shrinking for reasons far beyond the borrower's control. Yet both bankers and their customers are grateful to the Stock Exchange for taking action which saved them from what might have been an embarrassing position.

As far as I have gone in this comparison between the two periods, the advantage generally, I think you will agree, is largely in favour of 1938, but in one respect we are not so well off as we were in 1914, as we have lost a large proportion of our 1914 reserve of American securities.

EXPORT TRADE

The question of our export trade figured in the speeches of nearly all Bank Chairmen to their shareholders last year, and it has lost none of its importance to-day. That it is still receiving considerable attention in Government and trade circles is indicated by what has been said in Parliament, by the increased export credit facilities which have been foreshadowed, by the trade agreements entered into, particularly the important Anglo-American agreement, and by the deliberations of such bodies as the Federation of British Industries, and the Association of British Chambers of Commerce. In these days of fierce competition, with an ever-increasing tendency towards national self-sufficiency and industrialisation; when all countries are striving to sell and are becoming more unwilling to buy; when every kind of obstacle is placed in the channels of commerce, trade takes on the aspect more and more of commercial warfare, instead of being, as it should be, an exchange of goods for the benefit of both parties. Anything that can be done, therefore, in the direction advocated by the President of the Board of Trade, whereby arrangements might be made between the industries in the various countries, including our own, which would allocate markets fairly, and enable everyone to do the maximum of trade on the soundest possible basis, would be greatly welcomed.

The report was adopted and the proposed dividends were approved.